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Our Saviour.

Picturesque Holy Land

Scenes and Events

BY THE

REV. G. H. INGRAHAM, D.D.

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PICTURESQUE

HOLY LAND;

ITS

PEOPLE AND HISTORY,

WITH SCENES AND EVENTS IN THE LIVES OF

Jesus and His Apostles;

The History of the New Testament,

AND THE

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY THE REV. G. H. INGRAHAM, D. D.

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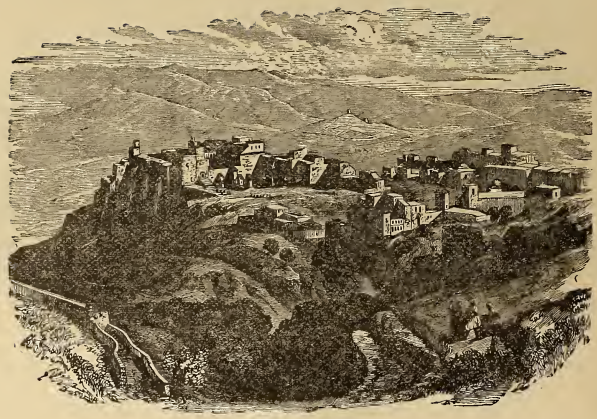
CÆSAREA PALESTINA.



SPHINX.

CÆSAREA. On the shore of the Great Sea, northwest of Jerusalem 70 miles, and 35 north of Joppa, on the ancient road from Tyre to Egypt (Jos. Wars, i. 21, § 5). The political capital of Palestine, and a very important city in the time of the apostles (Acts viii. 40; ix. 30; x. 1. 24; xi. 11; xii. 19; xviii. 22; xxi. 8, 16; xxiii. 23, 33; xxv. 1, 4, 6, 13). In Strabo's time there was at this place Strato's Tower, and a landing-place; and Herod the Great, at immense cost, built an artificial breakwater and founded a city, B. C. 22. The sea-wall was built of very large blocks of stone, 50 feet long, and extended into water of 120 feet depth, enclosing several acres, on which a large fleet could safely ride (Jos. Ant. xv. 9).

It was at Cæsarea that Origen (A. D. 185–201), a man of great natural ability, collated the text of the Septuagint, Hebrew and other Greek versions, making a page of six columns, each version in its proper column, thus forming what was called the *Hexapla—Six-ply* version of the Scriptures, which is the most important contribution to biblical literature in ancient times. Of some books he gave eight versions.

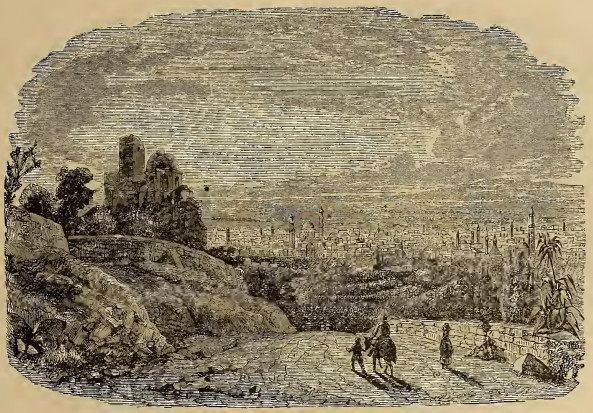


BETHLEHEM EPHRATAH.

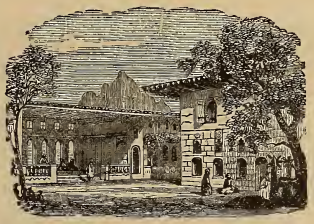
BETHLEHEM (*house of bread*). Four and a half miles south of Jerusalem. One of the most ancient cities in Palestine. Called EPHRATH (*fruitful*) (Gen. xxxv. 16; xlviii 7). The residence of Boaz and Ruth, the birthplace of David, and the residence of Saul. Rehoboam fortified it (2 Chr. xi. 16). The INN OF CHIMHAM was a halting place for those who would "go to enter into Egypt" (Jer. xli. 17); which was probably the same inn in which Jesus was born (Matt. ii. 1, 5; Luke ii, 4, 5). Called also B. JUDAH and CITY OF DAVID. Justin Martyr (A. D. 150) speaks of our Lord's birth as having taken place "in a certain cave very close to the village." The village is not again mentioned after the birth of Jesus, in the Scripture. The Emperor Hadrian planted a grove of Adonis over the cave, which stood 180 years (A. D. 135–315). The Empress Helena, after clearing away this grove, built a church on the spot, which has been continued, with additions, making it "a half church and half fort," until the present day.

The modern town is built on the low hill behind the convent (or church), facing the east. The hill is an offshoot of the main ridge, and ends in a little valley or narrow plain. The village is walled in, and is triangular. The plain east of the ridge is that on which tradition says the angels appeared to the shepherds, and it is called the Shepherds' Field. As the plains were always, anciently, cultivated, it is probable that the shepherds would have been found on the hill, where they now may be found, with their flocks.

A church containing the monuments of the three shepherds is mentioned by an early writer (Arculfus), as standing in the midst of the fields and terraced gardens. Jerome lived here, in a cell which is now pointed out next to the great church, where he wrote most of his commentaries, and compiled the Latin Vulgate, the best ancient version of the Scriptures, A. D. 385–420. The present town has about 3,000 people, nearly all Christians, who are makers of crucifixes, beads, models of the holy places, and other articles for sale to pilgrims.



DAMASCUS.



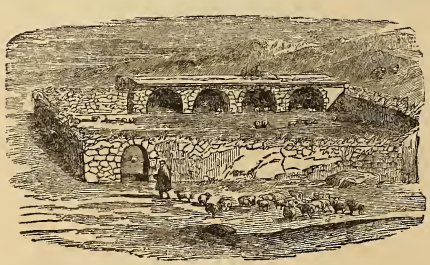
HOUSE IN DAMASCUS.

DAMASCUS. On the E. of Anti-Lebanon, 2,200 feet above the sea, in a fertile plain near the desert. The oldest city known to history. It is cut through by the Barada river, which divides into many branches, and together with the Helbon on the north and the Awaj on the south, fertilizes a region thirty miles in extent, which being favored by the finest climate, produces almost every valuable product of forest, field and garden. First mentioned in Gen. xiv, 15 and in Gen. xv. 2, as the city of Abraham's steward. For eight hundred years, from Abraham to David, the Scriptures are silent on Damascus. David put a garrison in Damascus (1 K. xi. 23; 2 Sam. viii. 6; Jos. Ant. vii. 5, § 2). During Asa's reign Benhadad pillaged cities in Naphtali (1 K. xv. 19, 20). After this it is mentioned many times. Has now 150,000 people; Christians 15,000; Jews 6,000.

The fine fabrics of Damascus were celebrated as early as 800 B. C. (Amos iii. 12). The damask silk and sword-blades are still famous. The old city stands on the south bank of the principal river, surrounded by a ruinous wall of ancient Roman foundations, and a patchwork of all the succeeding ages. The city is splendid, when viewed at a distance, but the houses are rudely built; the narrow streets, paved with big rough stones, or not at all, partly roofed across with mats, or withered branches; the bazaars are covered ways with a few stalls on both sides, each trade having its own quarter. ◆Modern name Esh Shaum.



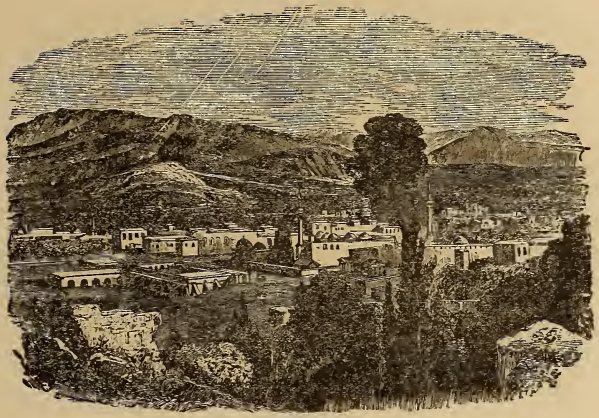
BOZRAH.



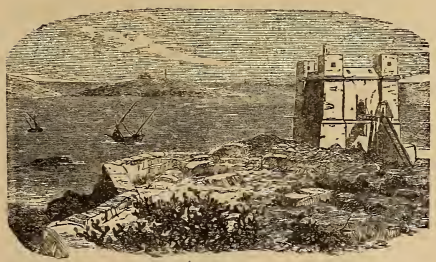
SHEEP-FOLD.

BOZRAH (*enclosure; sheepfold*). Chief city in Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 33). The modern name is Buseireh—*little Busreh* (Rob., ii. 167). It is still a strong fort on a hill-top among the mountains, about 25 miles southeast of the Dead Sea, half way to Petra (Is. xxxiv. 6, lxiii. 1; Jer. xlix. 13, 22; Amos i. 12; Micah ii. 12). It is the centre of a pastoral region.—2. In the plain country—the land of Mishor—(Jer. xlviii. 24). East of the Dead Sea and Lower Jordan are high table-lands, called Belka, where there are three ruins, named Um-el-Jemal (Beth-gamul), Kureiyeh (Kerioth), and Busrah (Bozrah), in the northeast section, which is a rich district near the Hauran. The walls of Bozrah were 4 miles in extent, and they did not include the suburbs. Temples, churches, mosques, and a beautiful theatre, are all in ruins; only a strong castle is left entire.

SHEEPFOLD. Sheepcotes or folds are generally open houses or enclosures, walled round Num. xxxii. 16; 2 Sam. vii. 8).



TARSUS.



PAUL'S BAY, MALTA.

TARSUS. Chief town of CILICIA; the birthplace of Paul the Apostle (Acts ix. 11, xxi. 39). It was an important city in the time of the Greek kings. Alexander conquered it; and it was under the rule of Antioch, and also that of the Ptolemies. Cæsar changed its name to Juliopolis. Augustus made it a free city. It was a celebrated seat of learning in the time of the early Roman emperors, and was compared by Strabo to Athens and Alexandria, and considered superior to them (xiv. 673). Among its famous citizens were Anthenodorus, the tutor of Augustus, and Nestor, the tutor of Tiberius. Antony and Cleopatra met on the banks of the river Cydnus, which divides Tarsus in two.



LAODICEA.



COIN OF LAODICEA—STRUCK BY THE ASIARCH.

LAODICEA. An ancient city on the Lycus, in the valley of the Meander, forty miles east of Ephesus. Its site was on seven hills, which were drained by two brooks, the Asopus and Caprus. The ruins are of a stadium, in very complete preservation, three theatres (one of which was 450 feet in diameter), bridges, aqueducts, and a gymnasium, which testify to its ancient wealth and importance. Its original name was Diospolis, (the city of Jupiter), which was changed to Rhoas, under which title it became the largest city of Phrygia (Pliny). Antiochus II gave it the name of his wife Laodike. The city was utterly destroyed A. D. 1230, since when it has lain in shapeless ruins, only visited for its marble and other materials. The seats in the stadium have letters and numbers, their owner's or the keeper's mark.

A recent visitor found a number of workmen sawing up the richly sculptured entablature of the ancient theatre, having been busy there for six years, cutting up the marble. Near them was a colossal statue, sawn into several pieces. In this manner, have disappeared, during the past twenty years, two agate pillars, 18 inches in diameter; a great number of composite richly sculptured columns, adorned with busts and heads in relief, and vases with wreaths of leaves and fruits, and statues and busts and architectural ornaments without number.



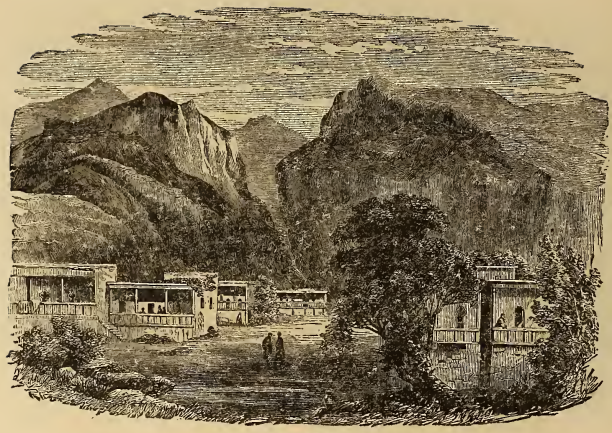
ACRE—ANCIENT ACCHO OR PTOLEMAIS.



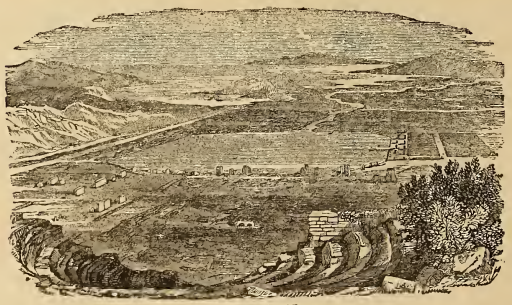
COIN OF HADRIAN.

ACRE. St. Jean D: the Bibical Accho, known as Ptolemais in the middle ages, is a seaport town situated on the coast of Syria eight miles north of Mount Carmel, and contains nearly 10,000 inhabitants. The ancient port is filling with sand and large ships must land at Hepa near Carmel.

Acre has often been the arena of warfare and has suffered many changes of fortune. In 1004 it was taken by the Genoese, in 1187 by the Sultan Aladin, afterwards it became the chief landing-place of the Crusaders; next it fell into the hands of the Egyptians, and in 1517 was captured by the Turks. In 1799 it was beseiged by the French for sixty-one days, but was successfully defended by the garrison, aided by a body of English sailors and marines under Sidney Smith. In 1832 it was stormed by Ibrahim Pacha, son of the viceroy of Egypt, and continued in his possession until it was taken in 1840 by a combined English, Austrian and Turkish fleet.



COLOSSÆ.

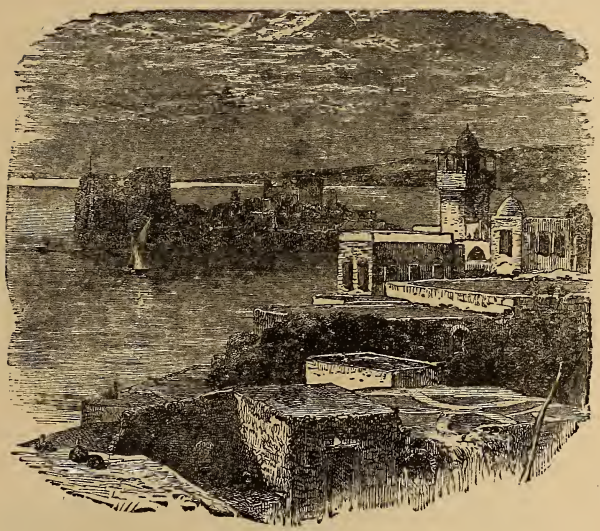


SITE OF EPHESUS.

COLOSSE, Colossæ. On the Lycus, a branch of the Mæander, in Phrygia, near Laodicea (Col. ii. 1; iv. 13). Pliny (Nat. Hist. v. 41) describes it as a celebrated city in Paul's time. Paul founded a church here, on his third tour. The ruins of the ancient city are near the modern village of Chonas.

EPHESUS. About the middle of the West of Asia Minor, opposite the island of Samos. The capital of Asia, which province under the Romans included only the west part of the peninsula. Built partly on hills and partly on the plain. The climate was excellent. The country around the city was very fertile, and its position most convenient for traffic with other regions of the Levant. In the time of Augustus it was the great metropolis of this section of Asia Minor. Paul's journeys indicate the facilities for travel by sea and land.

There is now a railroad from Smyrna to Aidin, with a station near the ruins of Ephesus, called Aysaluk (a-sa-look, *city of the moon*). The whole district covered by the ancient city and suburbs is now desolate.

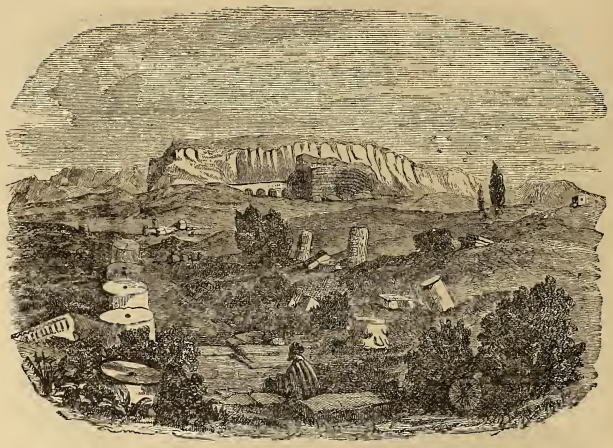


SIDON.



PROFILE ACROSS—JAFFA TO MOAB.

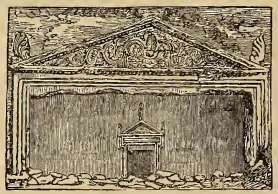
SIDON (*fishing*). Zidon (Phœnician *Tsidon*), (Gen. x. 15, 19). Great Zidon (Josh. xi. 8). Sidon (Matt. xi. 21; Mark iii. 8; Luke vi. 17). On the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, in the narrow Phœnician plain (two miles), under the range of Lebanon to which it once gave its own name (Jos. Ant. v. 3, 1). The city is built on the northern slope of a promontory that juts out into the sea, pointing southwest; and the citadel is on the height behind it. Zidon was the first-born of Canaan, and probably the city is an older one than Tyre, and the Phœnicians are (often) called Sidonians (never Tyrians) in Josh. xiii. 6; Judg. xviii. 7, etc. Skilled workmen were their special pride, not traders (1 K. v. 6). The prize given to the swiftest runner by Achilles was a large silver bowl, made at Sidon (Homer, Il. xxiii. 743). Menelaus gave Telemachus a most beautiful and valuable present, "a divine work, a bowl of silver with a gold rim, the work of Hephæstus, and a gift from King Phædimus of Sidon" (Od. iv. 614). Homer mentions the beautifully embroidered robes of Andromache, brought from Sidon. Pliny mentions the glass factories (v. 17).



GADARA.



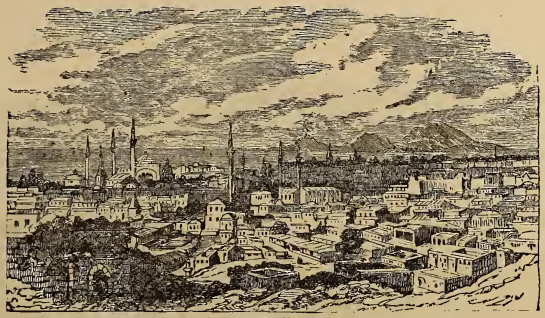
MUMMY.



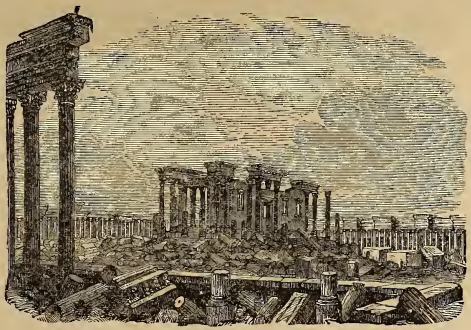
DOOR OF A TOMB.

GADARA. Five miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee, three miles from the river Hieromax. There were warm springs near the river, called Amatha. Josephus says it was a Greek city, and the capital of Peræa (Jos. B. J. iv. 7, § 3; Mark v. 1; Luke viii. 26–37). Here the Lord healed the demoniacs (Matt. viii. 28–34; Mark v. 1–21; Luke viii. 26–40). The most interesting ruins at Gadara are the tombs, which are very numerous in the cliffs around the city, cut in the solid rock, being rooms ten to twenty feet square, and some larger, with small recesses out of them for bodies, the doors being stone, turning on stone hinges. The space over which the ruins are scattered is about two miles, on a narrow, high ridge, sloping east, anciently walled all around. There was a straight street from end to end, with a colonnade on each side, and two very large theatres, now in ruins. Not a house or a column is standing.

TOMB. The most extensive tombs were cut in the solid rock, and had many little places for the bodies, which were laid in the *loculi* (*places*) in their dress, with the ordinary custom of the living, or graveclothes, as in some cases. The *loculus* (*one place*) was closed up by a stone, or several small stones, cemented into place; and the entrance to the tomb was securely closed by a heavy stone door, or by a roller, (round like a millstone, without the center hole), and a door also.

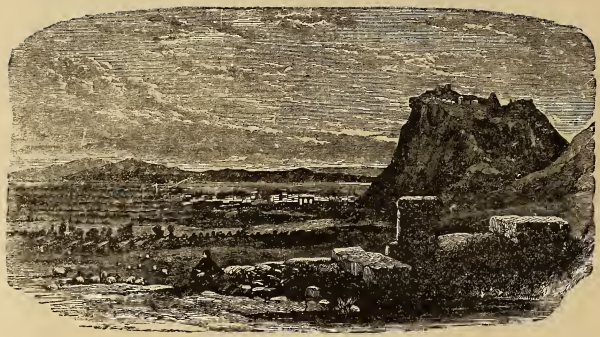


ICONIUM.



ICONIUM (Acts xiii. 51). Konieh, a large city; is on a table-land, a fertile plain, near a semicircle of snow-capped mountains in Asia Minor. This level district was Lycaonia, of which Cicero says it was the capital. It was on the route leading from Ephesus to Tarsus, Antioch, and the Euphrates. Here Paul was stoned, and left for dead (xiv. 19). The city is built out of the ruins of the ancient structures, and pieces of marble columns, capitals, and carved cornices appear everywhere in the masonry. It is now quite large, the residence of a pasha, surrounded with beautiful groves and gardens, well watered, and the resort of pilgrims who visit a saint's tomb. In the middle ages it was the capital of the Seljukian Sultans, and is called the cradle of the Ottoman empire. The traditional story of Paul and Thecla is located here.

TADMOR. Palmyra. City of Palms. Built by Solomon on the route from Palestine to the Euphrates, about midway between Damascus and the river; the whole distance being about 240 miles. The ruins are chiefly of Corinthian colonnades and temples, and, seen at a distance, are peculiarly imposing, and seem to surpass all others in their apparent vastness and general effect. None of Solomon's buildings have been identified, and the ruins are ascribed to works of the date of the 2d or 3d century of our era.

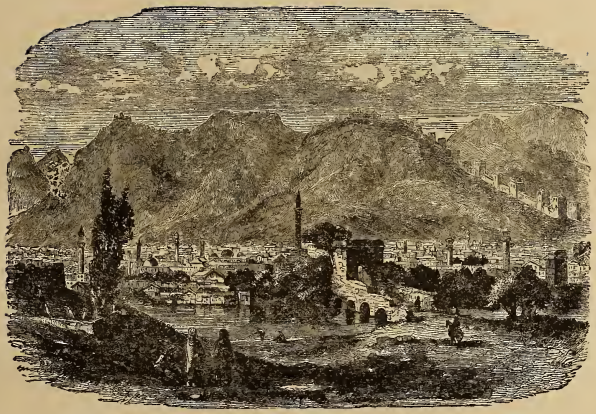


CORINTH.



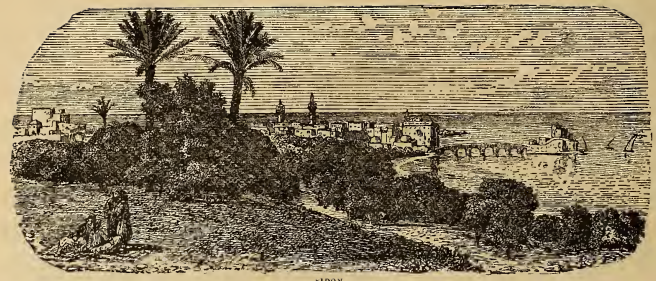
COIN OF CORINTH.

CORINTH. On the isthmus that joins Peloponnesus to Greece. The rock, Acrocorinthos, south of the city, stood 2,000 feet above the sea, on the broad top of which was once a town. The Acropolis of Athens can be seen from it, 45 miles (Liv. xlv. 28). It has two harbors: CENCHRÆA (now Kenkries), on the Saronic gulf, 7½ miles distant, east; and LECHÆUM, on the Gulph of Lepanto, 1½ miles west (Strabo viii. 6). Corinth was the natural capital of Greece, and was the commercial centre. Eminent for painting, sculpture, and works in metal and pottery. Famous for a temple to Venus of great wealth and splendor, the most ancient in Greece. Was the military centre during the Achaian league. Destroyed by the Romans, B. C. 146, and after 100 years of desolation the new city visited by Paul was built by Julius Cæsar, and peopled with freedmen from Rome (Pausanias—Strabo). Paul lived here eighteen months, and became acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla.

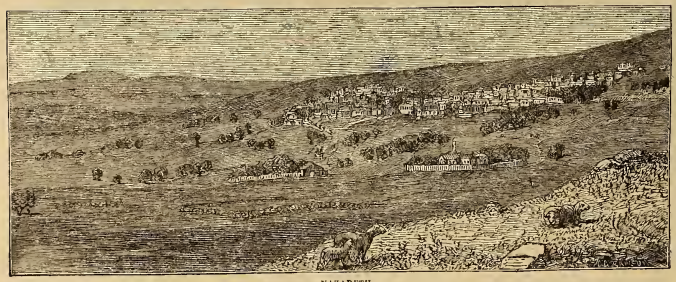


ANTIOCH IN SYRIA.

ANTIOCH in Syria. On the Orontes, 30 miles from the sea, 300 from Jerusalem. Founded by Seleucus Nicator (*conqueror*), B. C. 300, and namcd in honor of his father, Antiochus. It was the capital of the Greek and Roman governors of Syria for nearly 1000 years. Its suburb Daphne was famous for its sanctuary to Apollo and Diana (2 Macc. iv. 33); the sacred grove extending its cool shades and brooks of water for ten miles around. It was a sensual paradise, where pleasure, under the disguise of religion, dissolved the firmness of manly virtue. The first GENTILE CHURCH was founded here by Paul, and the disciples were here first called CHRISTIANS in derision by the pagans (Acts xi. 21–26). Ignatius who suffered martyrdom under Trajan, at Rome, was bishop of Antioch 40 years. In the time of Chrysostom (born here A. D. 344), the population was 200,000, one-half being Christians. The city had a street colonnade from end to end, built by Antiochus Epiphanes, and paved with granite by Antoninus Pius; most sumptuous marble baths, built by Caligula, Trajan and Hadrian; a marble palace of Diocletian, and was the finest and largest city in Western Asia. It lost greatly in wealth and population in several earthquakes: one in A. D. 526, destroying 250,000 people, at the time of the festival of the Ascension, when many strangers were gathered; and in 1822, one-fourth of the city and people, about 5000. It was of great importance during the Crusades, and is often mentioned for its sieges, battles, and the brilliant exploits of both Christian and Moslem in and about its walls. American Protestant missionaries began to preach there in 1856. Population now about 20,000. Arabian name *Antakia*. Ruins of aqueducts, marble pavements, columns, and other evidences of its ancient splendor are often found buried under rubbish.



SIDON.



NAZARETH.

NAZARETH (*the branch*). First mentioned in Matt. ii, 23, or rather, in the order of time, in Luke i. 26, as the scene of the Annunciation to Mary of the birth and character of Jesus (v. 31–33.)

The parents of Jesus came here soon after their return from Egypt (Luke ii. 39); and after the visit to the Temple, when he was twelve years old, Jesus returned here with them (ii. 51); he grew up here to manhood (iv. 16); from here he went down to Jordan to be baptized by John (Mark i. 9; Matt. iii. 13); his first teaching in public was in its synagogue (xiii. 54); here he was first rejected (Luke iv. 29); and Jesus of Nazareth was a part of the inscription on the cross (John xix. 19).

The rock of this whole region is a soft, white marl, easily crumbled; and there is probably not a house, or structure of any kind, nor even a loose stone, remaining of the time of Christ's residence there. Since the general features of hill and valley, fountains and water-courses, could not have greatly changed, we may accept the location of the "steep place," near the Maronite Church, and the Fountain of the Virgin, as historical." A great many other localities are pointed out by the residents as traditional sites of every event mentioned in the Gospels as having occurred there, but they have no other interest than in so far as they recall the gospel narrative.

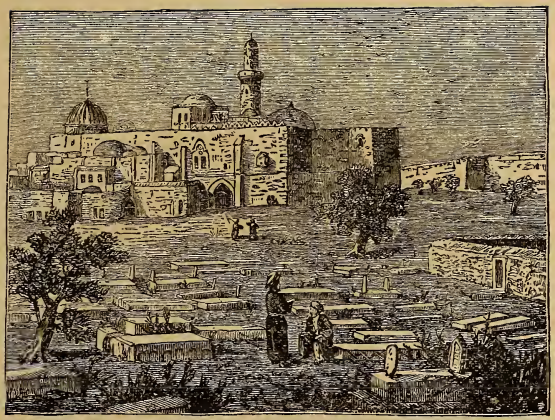


Gustave Doré

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Jesus Walking on the Sea.

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DAVID'S TOMB, MOUNT ZION.

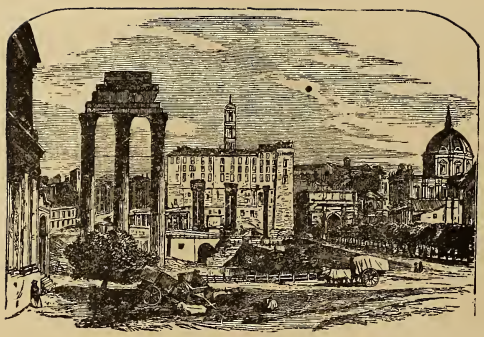


ALEXANDRIA.

ALEXANDRIA. Greek, Roman, and Christian capital of Egypt, founded by Alexander, B. C. 332. For centuries this was the largest city in the world. Population 600,000. The lighthouse of its spacious port was famous in the world of commerce as the PHAROS, one of the seven wonders. The great library is said to have had 700,000 volumes (Strabo), even after losing 400,000 by fire (B. C. 47), and was finally destroyed by the Saracens, A. D. 642. Among the learned men were Philo, a Jew, (author of works which contain the best array of Hebrew Platonism—almost an imitation of Christian ethics), and Origen and Clement, Christians, whose writings have influenced and directed religious men in all Christian nations to the present.

The Museum was a means of spreading a knowledge of Aristotle through the civilized world, and at one time it gathered 14,000 students from all the world. Modern astronomy arose there, under the direction of Eratosthenes, who taught the globe shape of the earth, its poles, axis, equator, arctic circles, equinoctial points, solstices, horizon, eclipses, and the distance of the sun. Hipparhcus was the great astronomer of the age, and discovered the precession of the equinoxes, gave methods of solving all triangles, and constructed tables of chords, tables of latitude and longitude, and a map of more than 1000 stars. The Almagest of Ptolemy (A. D. 138), was for 1,500 years the highest authority on the phenomena and mechanism of the universe. The same author described the world from the Canaries to China.

These systems were supplanted by the discoveries of Newton of the law of gravitation, and of Columbus of the New World. There was a very extensive botanical and zoological garden, and a school for the study of Anatomy and dissection. The temples of Isis and Sarepis were among the finest ever built, and were partly used for scientific purposes, having the most perfect instruments for astronomical observations then known. They were destroyed by Bishop Theophilus A. D. 390. ❧ Present population about 60,000 from all nations.



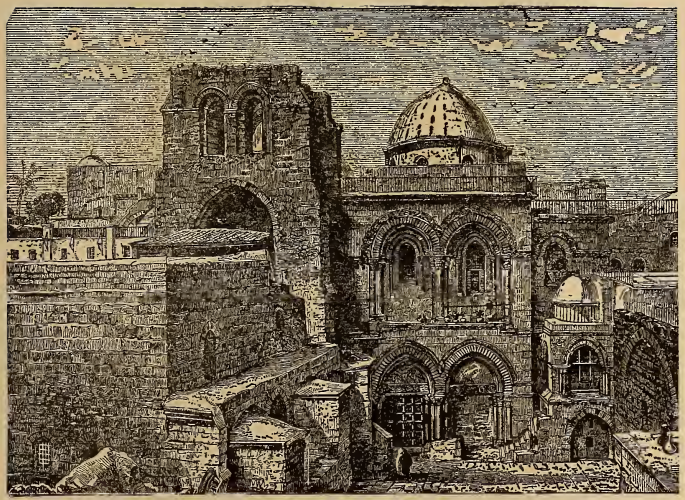
ROME. THE FORUM.



INN. CARAVANSERAI.

ROME. The City of Rome was founded B. C. 753, on seven hills, 15 miles from the mouth of the Tiber (Rev. xvii. 9). The modern city lies to the northwest of the ancient site, on what was the Campus Martius (Field of Mars), a plain north of the seven hills. It is only mentioned in Maccabees, Acts, Epistle to the Romans, and 2d Timothy. The Jews first settled in Rome after Pompey's conquests, when the Jewish king, Aristobulus, and his son were led in triumph. At the time of Paul's visit (after Augustus had "found the city of brick and left it of marble") the population was one million two hundred thousand (*Gibbon*)—one-half being slaves, and a large part of the freemen dependent on the rich, and living like paupers on public gratuities. Rome became the greatest repository of architecture, pictures, and sculptures that the world ever saw. The luxury, profligacy, and crime of this age is beyond the descriptive power of letters. It is believed that Paul lived here "two whole years," in his own hired house, bound by a chain to a soldier, according to the then custom of keeping certain prisoners (Acts xii. 6, xxviii. 16, 20, 30). Five of Paul's epistles were written at Rome, one of them just before his death, as is believed, by beheading.

INN (Heb. MALON). A lodging-place for the night. Only a room is to be had, the traveler must supply himself with furniture, bed, etc. They were built generally two stories high, and near water. One is mentioned in the history of Joseph (Gen. xlii. 27, and by Moses in his day (Ex. iv. 24), by Jeremiah; the habitation (inn) of Chimham (xli. 17), and the same by Luke, where Jesus was born (ii. 7). The Good Samaritan is said to have left money (in our standard about $2.50) to pay charges at the inn (Luke xxii).

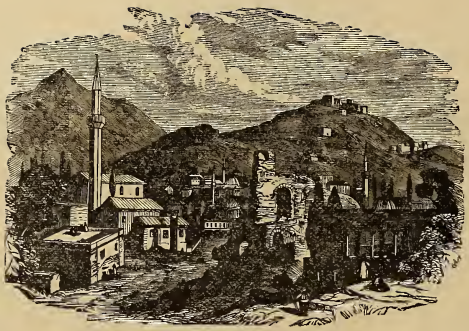


CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE. One of the most extensive monuments in Jerusalem is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a collection of buildings in a vast mass, without order, three hundred and fifty feet long by two hundred and eighty wide, including seventy sacred localities, presided over by seventeen different sects in separate chapels inside the edifice.

Jerusalem is now a sort of collection of churches and hospitals, with a great many vacant places strewed with ruins. Pilate s house, where Jesus was judged, is located at the northwest corner of the Haram area, and it probably stood on the site of Citadel of David.

"The past of Jerusalem is overflowing with thought. But the future is equally impressive. These ruins are not always to remain. The future T mple, and the restored Israel, when "Jerusalem shall be the throne of the Lord to all nations, claim the most earnest thought. The day when 'the feet' of the Lord 'shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which is over against Jerusalem toward the east,' is full of importance; and whether we look back or forward, we have to speak of Zion as 'the joy of the whole earth,' for 'salvation is of the Jews.' The present missionary work in Jerusalem is deeply interesting. * * But surely there is no spot on earth like Jerusalem."



PHILADELPHIA.

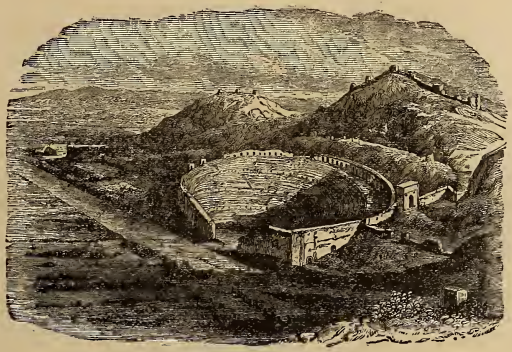


HOSPITALIS JERUSALEM.
Knights of St. John.

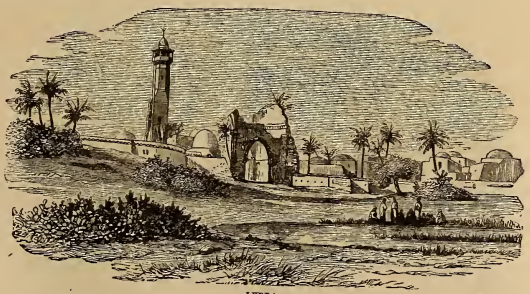


PAUL.
Engraved on copper, an ideal portrait, found in a cemetery, dated 480, A. D.

PHILADELPHIA. In Lydia, near Phrygia. PHILADELPHIA was founded and named by Attalus Philadelphus, B. C. 140, as a mart for the great wine district, which is celebrated by Virgil. It is on the little river Cogamus, which joins the Hermus near Sardis, surrounded almost by an amphitheatre of hills, and bowered in orchards, in the midst of extensive gardens. The rock is basaltic, and streams of lava may be traced in several tracts, but covered by deep, black, rich soil. The great staple is opium, which is entirely monopolized by the government. Herodotus says the sugar-cane was anciently cultivated, and mentions a confection which was made of tamarisk and wheat, which is to-day the favorite sweet-meat of Philadelphia (called *halva*), after a continuance of over 2,000 years. When Xerxes was on his way to Greece he rested under a great plane-tree near the city, and so much admired its beauty that he appointed a keeper for it, and adorned it with golden ornaments. Plane-trees still flourish here which surpass all others in the country.



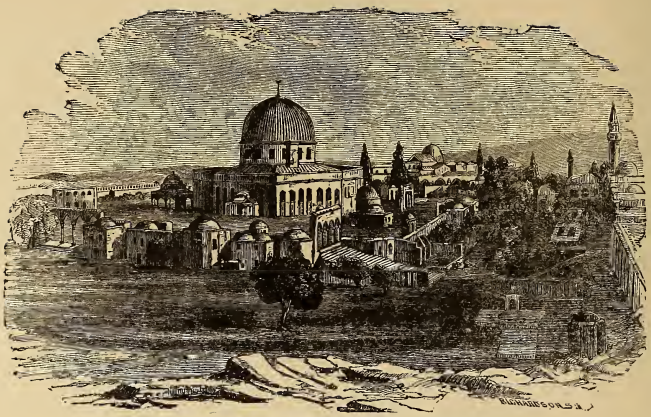
THEATRE AT EPHESUS.



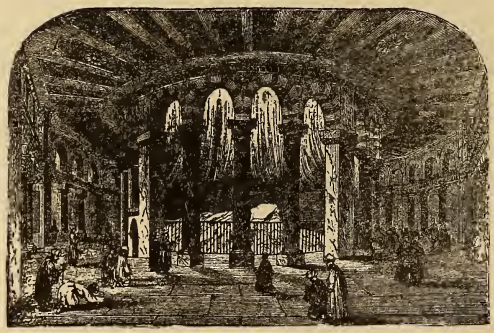
LYDDA.

THEATER (Gr. *theatron*). The place where dramatic performances or other public spectacles are exhibited (Acts xix. 29). Theaters were often used among the Greeks for public assemblies and the transaction of public business. Criminals were sometimes exposed and punished in the theatres (1 Cor. iv. 9).

LYDDA. Greek form of Lod. The first historical notice of this city, since Christ, is the signature of Ætius Lyddensis to the acts of the Council of Nicæa (A. D. 325); after which it is frequently mentioned, especially during the Crusades. The Arabs have a tradition that the final contest between Christ and the Antichrist will be at Lydda.

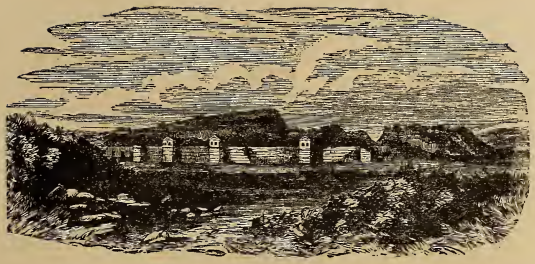


DOME OF THE ROCK, JERUSALEM.



INTERIOR OF THE DOME OF THE ROCK.

DOME OF THE ROCK. The Crusaders respected the Dome of the Rock, and held sacred service in it, but used the Aksa mosque for a stable, despising it as a work of Jews, the Temple of Solomon. It was so only in location, for El Aksa was built by the Mohammedans in the seventh century, on the site of the Temple of Solomon, whom they reverence among the prophets, as well as David, and also Jesus, the son of David.



PERGA.



SMYRNA.

PERGA. The ancient capital of Pamphylia, on the river Cestrus, seven miles from the sea. Diana (Artemis) was worshipped there, in a fine temple near the town. The coins of the city bear figures of Diana and the temple. Paul landed here from Paphos (Acts xiii. 13), and visited the city a second time on his return from the interior (xiv. 25). When Pamphylia was divided, Perga was made the capital of one section, and Side of the other. Called by the Turks *Eski-Kalessi*.

SMYRNA (Rev ii. 8–11). Designed by Alexander the Great, and built by his successors Antigonus and Lysimachus, near the site of the ancient city of the same name (which had been destroyed by the Lydians 400 years before). It stood at the head of a gulf of the Ægean Sea, by the mouth of the river Meles, having a range of mountains on three sides of it. Tiberius granted the city permission to erect a temple in honor of the Roman emperor and senate. John (Rev. ii. 9) probably referred to the pagan rites in his letter to the church in Smyrna.

The only ancient ruins are on the mountains, south. On the summit is a ruined castle. In the time of Strabo it was one of the most beautiful cities in all Asia (Minor). Polycarp was martyred here, being condemned by the Jews also.



ROBINSON'S ARCH, JERUSALEM.



TETRADRACHM OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT. B. C. 350.

ROBINSON'S ARCH. The stones comprising the arch were found by Lieutenant Warren buried under 40 feet of rubbish; one stone having broken through the roof of an aqueduct, lay on the rocky bottom at the depth of 63 feet.

ALEXANDER (*men helper*). King of Macedon. Called the Great. Born at Pella B. C. 356, son of Philip and Olympias. Educated by the famous philosopher Aristotle. Alluded to in Daniel's prophesy. He destroyed the Persian empire and placed Greeks in power there; conquered Asia, Egypt, Syria, and founded the city of ALEXANDRIA (B. C. 332), which may be said to have been built on the ruins of Sidon and Tyre, for it grew rich and powerful on the Oriental trade which formerly fed those cities, and was then diverted from the Euphrates to the Red Sea route. He married Roxana and Parysatis, Eastern princesses, an example followed by 80 generals and 10,000 soldiers of his army, who married Oriental wives. Josephus gives an account of a visit of Alexander to Jerusalem, and his reception by the high priest, which has been called fabulous (Ant. xi. 8). He died at Babylon B. C. 323, only 32 years old, of intemperance.



HEBRON.



ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA.

HEBRON. The City of Hebron is one of the most ancient, built seven years before Zoan (Num. xiii. 22), and even older than Damascus (Gen. xii. 18). Its original name was Arba, or Kirjath Arka (city of Arba), from Arba, the father of Anak (xxxiii. 2; Josh. xiv. 15, xv. 13) It was also called MAMRE (Gen. xxiii. 19, xxxv. 27). The ancient city was in a valley, and its pools help fix its site and identity (2 Sam. iv. 12). Many years of the lifetime of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were spent here, where they were all buried; and from Hebron Jacob and his family set out for Egypt, by way of Beersheba. The city was given to Caleb by Joshua, who drove out the Anakim. One of the CITIES OF REFUGE. It was David's royal residence for seven years and a half; where most of his sons were born; and here he was crowned king over all Israel (2 Sam. ii), when David changed the royal residence to Jerusalem. Fortified by Rehoboam. It was occupied after the captivity; but fell into the hands of the Edomites, from whom it was recovered by Judas Maccabæus (1 Macc. v. 65). It was called Hebron or Castle of Abraham during the Crusades. The modern town is called Khulil (*the friend* "of God"), by the Arabs, and lies on the eastern and southern side of a beautiful valley. The houses are all of stone, well built.

ANTIOCH in Pisidia. Founded by the same king (who built 10 or 15 others of the same name), and peopled them by hired immigrants from Magnesia on the Mæander. On the south side of Mt. Paroreia, on the boundary between Pisidia and Phrygia, overlooking a broad plain. Recent discoveries of ancient inscriptions prove the site correct. There are ruins of several churches, temples, a theatre, and an aqueduct of which 21 arches are now entire. The ancient city was often visited by Paul (Acts), with Barnabas, Silas, and Timothy, who was a native of this district.



ORIENTAL BANQUET.



EMBROIDERED ROBE.



EGYPTIAN HEAD-DRESS.



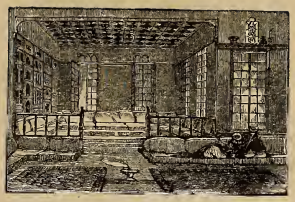
DIANA.

BANQUET. Entertainment furnished at the expense of one man; usually toward the close of the day, between five and six, and called supper. On grand occasions the invitations were given out some days before, and on the day appointed a servant was sent to announce that the time had arrived, and the guest was expected (Matt. xxii. 8; Luke xiv. 17). After accepting the invitation, to neglect to attend was no less than an insult. When all who had been invited had arrived the master of the house shut the door (Luke xiii. 24). The first act of welcome was washing the feet and anointing the hair with perfumed oil; and among the wealthy, on great days, a handsome cloak was furnished to each guest, to be worn during the festivity (Ecc. ix. 8; Rev. iii. 4).

EMBROIDERY (Hebrew ROKEN), (Ex. xxxv. 35). Needlework. Two kinds of extra fine cloth were made, one by the *roken* of various colors and figures, called *rikmah*, and the other by the *chosheb* (*cunning workmen*), into which gold or other metallic threads are woven, besides the usual colors, both of which were made in the loom. The needle was used where the figure was wanted on one side only of the cloth.

HEAD-DRESS. The head-dress is a very important matter in the hot climate of the East, besides its use "for glory and for beauty" (Ex. xxviii). There are several names of different articles used by different persons, or at various times. 1. ZANIPH (to roll or wind), worn by nobles, and ladies, and kings; mitre was a turban, intended for display. 2. PEER, modern name tarbush (or kaook), the red cap.

DIANA, Latin. (Greek, ARTEMIS). The twin sister of Apollo, the sun-god. She is the moon goddess. The Assyrians named them Adrammelech and Anamelech. Diana was called the goddess of hunting, chastity, marriage, and noeturnal incantations. In Palestine the name was ASHTORETH. The services were performed by women (*melisai*), and eunuchs (*megabissoi*), with a high priest (*essene*). The great temple at Ephesus, and grove at Daphne, were the most noted shrines of this worship. The image at Ephesus was said to have fallen out of heaven complete! The great temple was 425 by 220 feet, and had 127 columns of marble, each 60 feet high.



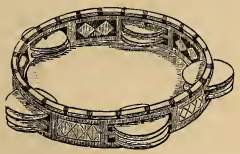
DIVAN.



CANDLESTICK.



COIN OF ANTIOCHUS III.



TIMBREL.

CANDLESTICK. The seven-branch candlestick was placed in the room of the Tabernacle called the Holy Place. The Tabernacle was a tent-like structure adapted to the roving life of the desert, and made more important than the ordinary tent.

ANTIOCHUS III, THE GREAT, succeeded his brother Seleucus Keraunus (*thunderer*, who was poisoned after ruling three years), and was the first really strong man since Seleucus, who founded the family and empire in Syria. He was only 15 when he began to rule, and his great rival, Ptolemy IV, Philopater (*father loving*), of Egypt, was crowned only two years later. Ptolemy began his reign by murdering nearly all of his relations, including his mother and father. Antiochus did no violence to his friends, but planned how to increase the wealth and power of his people, and passed his whole life in war.



ADORATION—MODERN EGYPTIAN.



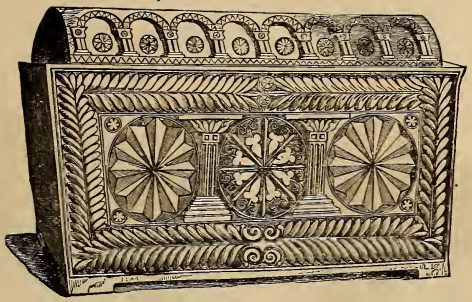
WASHING HANDS BEFORE MEALS.



AT DINNER.

ADORATION. The acts and postures in worship are similar in all Oriental nations. It is believed that the Hebrews in *all* their prayers used all the forms of posture and prostration that the modern Arabs have grouped into *one* prayer, which are nine positions. All of these are found on the monuments of Egypt and Assyria. Prayer is made standing, with the hands lifted or crossed or folded; this is the posture before kings or great men. The hands are also stretched forth as in supplication; one hand only is lifted in taking an oath (Gen. xiv.). Kneeling is a common mode (1 K. vii; Ezra ix.; Dan. vi.; Luke xxii.); prostration of the body, resting on the knees and arms, the forehead touching the ground, and the whole body lying along, the face being down. The monuments show figures kneeling on one knee and smiting the breast; sitting on the heels, the hands being folded, is a very respectful attitude (1 Chr. xvii. 16; 1 K. xviii. 42).

WASHING THE HANDS AND FEET. As no knives or forks were used at the table, washing of the hands before and after meals was necessary (Matt. xv. 2). Because of the dust and heat of the Eastern climate, washing the feet on entering a house was an act of respect to the company, and of refreshment to the traveler (Gen. xviii. 4). When done by the master of the house it was an especial mark of respect and honor to the guest.



SARCOPHAGUS.



CUP OF THE PTOLEMIES.



CART.



CART.

CART. Wagon. Were open or covered (Num. vii. 3), and used to carry persons and burdens (Gen. xlv. 19; 1 Sam. vi. 7), or produce (Amos ii. 13). There were no roads, and the only ones now in use have been lately made, from Joppa to Jerusalem, and from Beirut to Damascus.

SARCOPHAGUS. A stone sarcophagus was used for a great person—king, etc. The dead were carried on a bier, by the relatives or hired persons, or by any who wished to honor the dead or the relatives.



SYCAMORE FIG.



FIG.

FIG. (Heb. TEENAH; Arab, *tin, the ficus carica tree;* Gr. *suke,* fig-tree; *suka* (sycamore) figs. Three kinds are cultivated: 1. The early fig (Heb. BOKKORE, *early fig;* BICCURAH, *first ripe*), ripe in June, green in color.—2. The summer fig (KERMOUS), ripe in August, is sweet and the best, purple in color; and the green fig (*pag*) which remains on the tree all winter. (*Beth-phage,* place of figs.) DEBELAH, cake of figs in 1 Sam. xxx. 12. It is still used in the East as the most convenient and best poultice (2 K. xx. 7; Is. xxxviii. 21). "To sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree," indicates in the East the fullest idea of peace, security and prosperity. Jeremiah (as well as several other prophets) uses the fig through all of his books as an emblem of good or evil, and particularly in chapter xxiv. Jesus made frequent use of the tree or its fruit as an emblem or a means of instruction, especially in the case of the barren fig tree as a lesson against deceit.



BALM OF GILEAD.



POMEGRANATE.

POMEGRANATE, (Heb. RIMMON). A bush with dark green foliage and crimson flowers. The fruit is red when ripe, and very juicy. The rind is used in the manufacture of leather. It is a native of Asia. The pillars in Solomon's Temple were adorned with carved figures of this fruit 1 K. vii. 18, 20). A fragment of the fruit with its pearly seeds imbedded in ruby liquid, is very beautiful. "Thy cheeks are like a piece of pomegranate" is the allusion of the poet to the fine transparent tint (Ca. iv. 3).



JESUS CHRIST, KING OF KINGS.



SHEKEL.



HEAD OF TITUS. COIN OF HEROD AGRIPPA II.



HOLY SEPULCHRE, A. D. 1150.



CAVITAS. REGIS REGUM OMNIUM.
HOLY SEP. TOWER OF DAVID. TEMPLE.
Amorium. I. 1162-1137.

SHEKEL. Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah and weighed to Ephron 400 shekels of silver, current with the merchant (xxiii. 6). A half-shekel was the yearly temple dues (Ex. xxx. 13, 15).

HEROD AGRIPPA II (36). He was educated at Rome, and was only 17 at his father's death. His first appointment was the kingdom of Chalcis, and afterwards the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, with the title of king (Acts xxv). Nero added several cities. He built many splendid public buildings in Jerusalem and Berytus. Juvenal in his satires notices his relation to his sister Berenice. He died at Rome in the third year of Trajan, A. D. 100, the last of the Herods.



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Jerusalem!

FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

Gaye Publishing House



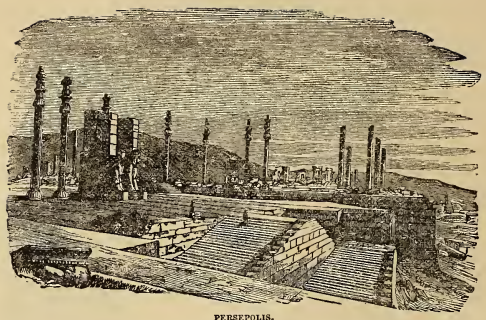
JEWISH HIGH PRIEST.



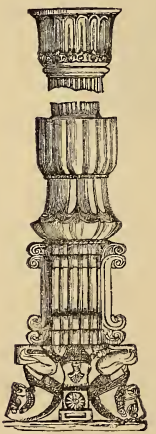
NEBO.

PRIEST (Hebrew KOHEN *to fortell?* or *a mediator, a messenger*), Job xxxiii. 23). The word priest means one who presides over things relating to God, or, as Paul says, "Every high-priest taken from among men, is constituted on the behalf of men, with respect to their concerns with God, that he may present both gifts and sacrifices for sins" (Heb. v. 1). Adam is the first recorded priest; Noah was the first after the deluge. The Hebrews were promised that, if they would keep the law of Moses, they should be "a peculiar treasure," "a kingdom of priests," "a holy nation" (Ex. xix. 5, 6). The support of the high-priest was, the tithe of one-tenth of the tithes assigned to the Levites (Num. xviii. 28; Neh. x. 38). The candidate for orders must prove his descent from Aaron; be free from bodily defects (Lev. xxi. 16–23); must not mourn outwardly; must marry only a young woman.

NEBO (*interpreter of the gods*). A Babylonish god. Nebo was the god of learning and letters among the Chaldeans, Babylonians and Assyrians (Is. xlvi. 1; Jer. xlviii. 1). Nebo was the Babylonian name of the planet Mercury. This word is in the formation of several names, Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan, Nebushasban, etc. The cut represents the statue of the god set up by Pul, king of Assyria, in the British Museum, London.



PERSEPOLIS.

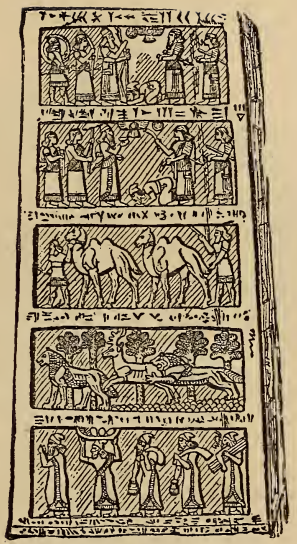


COLUMN AT PERSEPOLIS.

PERSEPOLIS. The capital of Persia, and partly burnt by Alexander, the temples—built of stone—only escaping. Antiochus Epiphanes attempted to capture and rob the Temple but was defeated (1 Macc. vi. 1, 2; 2 Macc. ix. 2). This city has been supposed to be identical with Pasargadæ, the capital of Cyrus; but that city was 42 miles north of Persepolis, at a place now called *Murgaub*, where there is shown a tomb of Cyrus. The site of Persepolis is called Chehl-Minar (*forty pillars* or *minarets*), from the remaining pillars of the palace built by Darius and Xerxes. The ruins here show such parts of buildings as have entirely disappeared from the remains in Assyria, such as gates, columns, window-frames, staircases, etc., and giving a new style of column—very tall and slender. Pasargadæ was the ancient, and Persepolis the latter capital of Persia.



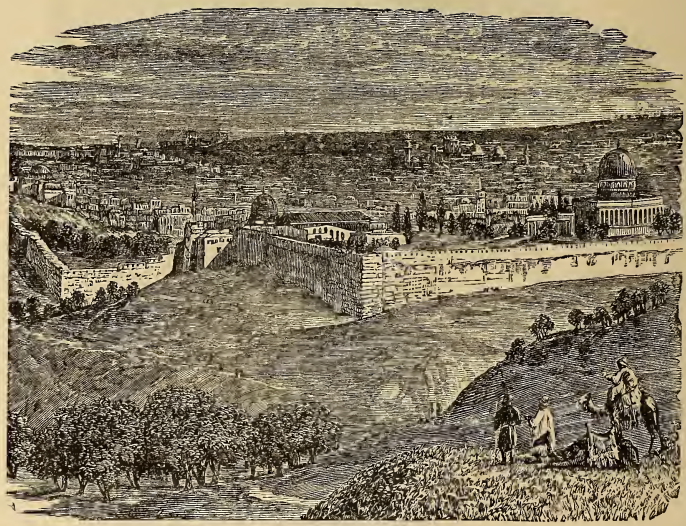
FRUIT OF DATE PALM.



BLACK OBELISK OF NIMROUD.

DATES. Fruit of the palm tree, called *clusters* in Cant. vii. 7, and *honey* in 2 Chr. xxxi. 5, dates in the margin. In many parts of Arabia the staple product and the main source of landed wealth is the date palm, of which there are many species. The Arabs believe the tree is a blessing granted only to them. Mohammed taught "Honor the date tree, she is your mother." There are one hundred and thirty varieties, seventy of which are well known, each of which has its peculiar name.

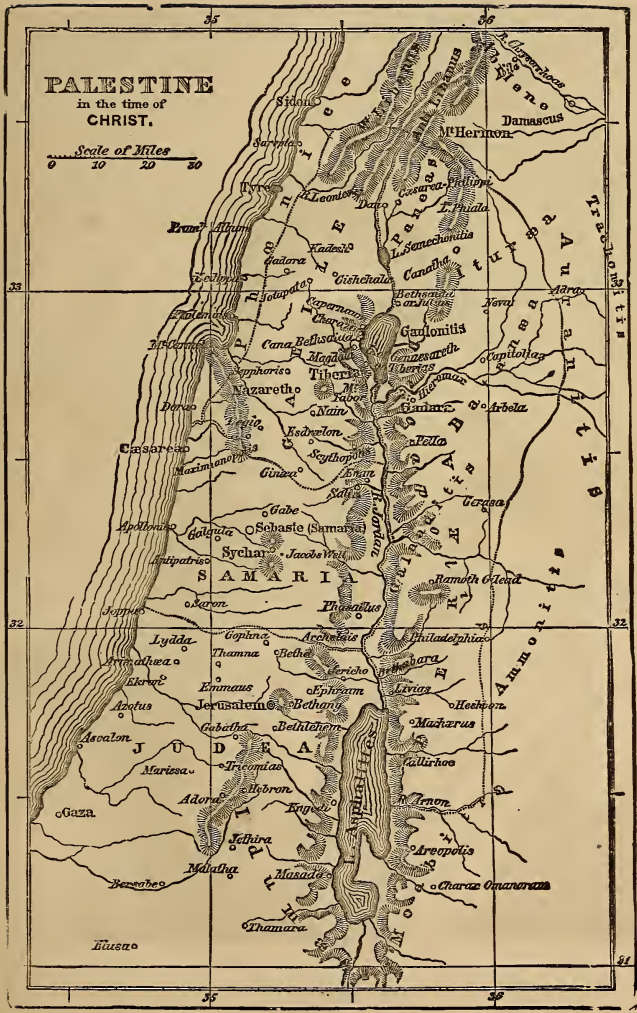
THE BLACK OBELISK of Nimroud; a piece of black marble, six feet six inches high, one foot six and one-half inches square at the top, and two feet square at the bottom, the upper half covered with five panels of figures, with inscriptions between each panel, and also many lines below the lower one; altogether two hundred and ten lines. The story may be inferred from the text in 2 K. xvii., xviii. The first panel, at the top, exhibits the king, attended by his eunuch, and a bearded officer (perhaps the returned conqueror); a captive kisses his foot, and two officers wait the king's orders. The image of Baal, and a circle enclosing a star (the sun?) are similar to those on the rocks at Nahr el Kelb. The same images, reversed in position, are in the second panel. One may mean Morning, and the other Evening; and both, with the figures in the other panels bringing and presenting tribute, indicate that the captives were so many, and the tribute so vast, that they consumed the whole day in their presentation. Some of the figures on the obelisk resemble those on the wall of the small temple of Kalabshe, who are enemies of Rāamses II, and are understood to represent Jews in both cases. The inscription, as interpreted by Rawlinson, mentions the receiving by the king of tribute from the cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Gebal, in his twenty-first year; defeating the king of Hamath, and twelve other kings of the upper and *lower* country (Canaan, lower). Dr. Hincks reads the names of Jehu, king of Israel, and dates the obelisk 875 B. C. Dr. Grotefend reads the names of Tiglath Pileser, Pul, and Shalmanassar, and refers to the accounts in Isaiah (xx.), and Nahum (iii).



VIEW OF JERUSALEM.

JERUSALEM (*foundation of peace*). First mentioned in Gen. xiv. 18, by the name of Salem, whose king was Melchizedek (who is said by the Rabbis to be the patriarch Shem). The name Shalaim (Ps. lxxvi. 2) means two cities, and is applied to the cities or quarters on (modern) Zion and in the Tyropœon valley. At the conquest of Canaan the name of its king was Adoni-zedek (*lord of justice*), (Josh. x. 1, 3), almost the same as Melchizedek (*king of righteousness*).

The city is small, but there is scarcely a place of any note, not even Nineveh or Babylon, that has been, to modern scholars, such a profound puzzle. The descriptions of Josephus are minute, his knowledge being exact and complete; and the hills on which the city stands are so marked and distinct from each other, that it seems almost marvelous that there could have been any difficulty, until we are reminded of the fact that during the middle ages, and especially during the Crusades, it was regarded as a peculiarly sacred city, and as such must needs have every event that is mentioned in the Bible as having happened in or near it located and honored with some monument, costly and showy in proportion to the importance of the event so honored.


PALESTINE
in the time of
CHRIST.
Scale of Miles
0 10 20 30
35
36
33
32
31
Sidon
Sarepta
Tyre
Ptolemais
Mt Carmel
Dora
Cæsarea
Maximianopolis
Apollonia
Joppa
Lydda
Jamnia
Azotus
Ascalon
Gaza
Marissa
Adora
Jethira
Maiatha
Berzabe
Elusa
Thamara
Masada
Engedi
Hebron
Tricomias
Jerusalem
Bethany
Bethlehem
Emmaus
Jericho
Ephraim
Gophna
Thamna
Archelais
Sebaste (Samaria)
Sychar
Jacobs Well
Gabe
Ginea
Scythopolis
Salim
Enon
Pella
Gadara
Hippos
Tiberias
Magdala
Cana
Bethsaida
Capernaum
Chorazin
Dalmanutha
Nazareth
Mt Tabor
Nain
Endor
Jezrael
Esdrelon
Gamala
Gaulonitis
Seleucia
Antioch
Orontes R.
Mt Lebanon
Mt Hermon
Damascus
Abana R.
Pharpar R.
Iturea
Trachonitis
Batanea
Auranitis
Gaulanitis
Peræa
Samaria
Judea
Galilee
Idumea
Arabia
Ammonitis
Philadelphia
Heshbon
Machærus
Lillirhoe
Areopolis
Charax Onarcerum
Livias
Betharam
Julias
Bethsaida
Capitolias
Arbela
Gerasa
Mamoth Galead
Naval
Adara
Cæsarea Philippi
Dan
L. Semechonitis
Kadesh
Cedes
Ptolemais
Tyre
R. Leontes
R. Jordan
L. Asphaltites
L. Tiberias
L. Phiala
R. Chrysorhoas
R. Zenon



ABRAHAM.

THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY LAND.

Palestine is bounded on the north, by mount Libanus, or Lebanon, which separates it from that part of Syria, anciently called Phœnicia; on the east by mount Hermon, which divides it from Arabia Deserta; on the south by Arabia Petrea; and on the west by the Mediterranean sea, or sea of Syria.

This country received the name of Palestine from the Philistines, who dwelt on the seacoast; it was called Judea, from Judah; and it is termed the Holy Land, being the country where Jesus Christ was born, preached his holy doctrines, confirmed them by miracles, and laid down his life for mankind. Palestine is about one hundred and eighty-five miles in length, and generally eighty in breadth; it is situated between 31° and 33° 40′ north latitude.

The climate of Palestine is, during a great part of the year, very hot. The easterly winds are usually dry, though they are sometimes tempestuous; and those which are westerly, are attended with rain. The heat here might be expected to be excessive; yet mount Libanus, from its uncommon height, is covered all the winter with snow.

The first rains, as they are called, generally fall about the beginning of November; and the latter rains in the month of April. In the country round Jerusalem, if a moderate quantity of snow falls in the beginning of February, and the brooks soon after overflow their banks, it is thought to forbode a fruitful year; and the inhabitants make rejoicings upon this occasion, as the Egyptians do with respect to the Nile; this country is seldom refreshed with rain during the summer season.

The rocks of Judea are, in many places, covered with a soft chalky substance, in which is inclosed a great variety of shells and corals. The greatest part of the mountains of Carmel, and those of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, are overspread with a white chalky stratum. In mount Carmel, are gathered

many stones, which, being in the form of olives, melons, peaches, and other fruit, are imposed upon pilgrims, not only as those fruits petrified, but as antidotes against several diseases.

With respect to the rivers of the country, the Jordan, called by the Arabs Sceriah, is not only the most considerable, but, next to the Nile, is the largest, either in the Levant or in Barbary. It has its source at the bottom of mount Libanus or Lebanon, and is formed from the waters of two fountains, which are about a mile distant from each other, One of them lies to the east, and is called Jor; the other, which is exposed to the south, is named Dan. The confluence of the two streams is found near the ancient city of Cesarea Philippi, which is at present only a village, and called Beline. The river takes a course between the east and south, and, after running seven miles, falls into the lake Samochon or Mathon, at present called Huletpanias, about six miles in length, from north to south, and nearly four in breadth, from east to west. The Jordan issues from this lake, and flows through a great plain, passing under a stone bridge called Jacob's bridge, consisting of three arches well constructed. The river then continues its course as far as the lake of Tiberias, near the ancient cities of Chorazin and Capernaum, where it mixes with its waters. When it issues from this lake, which is about eighteen miles in length, and eight in breadth, it takes the name of Jordan major, dividing Perea from Samaria, the plains of the Moabites from Judea, and receiving the waters of the Dibon, the Jazer, the Jacob, and the Carith. After being augmented by these streams, in a course of sixty-five miles from the lake of Tiberias, or sea of Galilee, it discharges itself into the Dead sea. The Jordan, in the rainy seasons, overflows its banks to the distance of more than four miles; and, on account of the inequality of the ground, forms two or three channels. Its current is extremely rapid, and the water always muddy; but when taken from the river, and put into any kind of vessel, it very soon clarifies, and is sweet.

The Dead sea is a name of modern date; the ancients call it the lake of Asphaltites, the sea of Sodom, the Salt sea, the lake or Sirbon; the Arabs name it Bahheret-Lut; that is, the sea of Lot. It is about fifty miles in length, and ten in breadth. The lofty mountains of the country of the Moabites are on the eastern side, and discharge into it the waters of Arnon and the Jaret. On the west and south it is bounded

by very high mountains also. It is likewise on the west that the brook Cedron, which rises at Jerusalem, empties into this sea.

We are informed that this vast lake was covered formerly with fruit trees and abundant crops, and that from the bosom of the earth, now buried under its waters, arose the superb cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Segor. No plants of any kind grow in this lake. The bottom of it is black, thick, and fœtid. Branches of trees which fall therein become petrified in a little time The Dead sea produces a kind of bitumen, which may be found floating on the surface, like large lumps of earth. This bitumen is a sulphurous substance, mixed with salt; it is as brittle as black pitch, is combustible, and exhales, while burning, a strong and penetrating smell. The ancient Arabs used it for smearing and embalming their dead, to preserve them from perishing. The mountains near this sea produce a kind of black stone, which, when polished, has a beautiful lustre.

Tyre, called by the Turks Sour, is about twenty miles to the south of Sidon. It was once very celebrated for its purple, called the Tyrian dye, produced from a shell-fish. This city was, in ancient times, the centre of an immense commerce and navigation, and the nurse of arts and sciences. The ancient city stood, originally, on an island, joined to the main land by a mole; the remains of which appear at present. It has two harbors; that on the north side is very good; but the other is choked up with ruins. The present inhabitants are only a few poor fishermen, who live in vaults and caves.

Jericho is situated in a large plain, about twenty miles long, and ten broad, bounded by a variety of mountains on the south-west, the west, and north; it is at present inhabited by a few miserable Arabs.

The mount of Forty Days, is situated on the north side of the plain of Jericho; the summit is covered neither with shrubs, trees, nor earth, but consists of a solid mass of white marble: it is very diffieult and dangerous to ascend, the path leading by a winding course, between two dismal abysses. The mountain is one of the highest in the province, and one of its most sacred places. It takes its name from the rigorous fast which Christ observed here. From this mount may be seen the hills of Arabia, the country of Gilead, the country of the Ammonites, the plains of Moab, and that of Jericho, the river Jordan, and the whole extent of the Dead Sea. Opposite to Jericho, beyond Jordan, rises Mount Nebo.

Jerusalem is encompassed with hills, so that the city seems as if situated in an amphitheatre; there are few remains of the city as it appeared in Christ's time; the situation being changed; for Mount Sion, the highest part of ancient Jerusalem, is almost excluded; while the places adjoining to mount Calvary are nearly in the centre. This city, which is about three miles in circumference, is situated on a rocky mountain, on all sides of which are steep ascents, except toward the north. The walls are not strong, nor have they any bastions. The city has six gates. There are supposed to be about twelve or fourteen thousand inhabitants in Jerusalem.

Nazareth, now only a small village, is on the top of a high hill.

Cana of Galilee, otherwise called Cana Minor, celebrated for the miracle wrought by Christ, of changing the water into wine, is nothing more than a small village, with very few inhabitants.

Sidon, called by the Turks Sayd, is situated on the sea-coast. It was anciently a place of great strength, and had a very extensive commerce. Though it is still populous, and a place of considerable trade, it has fallen from its ancient grandeur. Its exports consist in silks, with raw and spun cotton; the manufacturing of which employs most of the inhabitants, amounting to about five thousand. The city is defended by an old castle, built in the sea.

Jasa, the ancient Joppa, is the port where the pilgrims disembark. They generally arrive in November, and repair without delay to Jerusalem.

Bethlehem, also called Ephrata, and the city of David, is famous for being the birth-place of Christ. It is about two miles southeast of Jerusalem, on the ridge of a hill; at present only an inconsiderable place.

Raha, the ancient Jericho, is eighteen miles northeast of Jerusalem, situated in a plain six or seven leagues long, by three wide, surrounded by a number of barren mountains.

Habroun, or Hebron, is twenty-four miles south of Bethlehem. The Arabs call it El-Kahil, the well-beloved. It is situated at the foot of an eminence, on which are some remains of an ancient castle.

Mount Carmel, on the south side of the bay of Acre, projects at one part into the sea, forming a great promontory, called the point of Carmel. There are a number of grottos, gardens, and convents on this mount: as also many cisterns for receiving the rain water. On this mountain was a fortress called Ecbatane.

Mount Tabor is most delightfully situated, rising amidst the plains of Galilee, distant about twelve miles from the city of Tiberias ; it is distinguished by different names, as Itabyrion, Taburium, and by the Arabs Gibel-el-Tor. It is in appearance like a sugar-loaf, and is covered from the top to the bottom with small trees.

Palestine, which comprehends the ancient country of Canaan, and was occupied by nine tribes of Israel, has experienced many and severe revolutions ; the extreme fertility of the country, and its many advantages and happy situation, induced the neighboring and powerful kingdoms to attempt its subjection ; most of them succeeded in reducing to obedience and slavery the peaceful inhabitants : the Persians, Saracens, Syrians, and Romans, have alternately been masters for a time, and then obliged to yield to superior force : they treated the conquered with the utmost barbarity, and committed the greatest devastation and slaughter ; not even sparing old or young, women or helpless children. Thus it continued changing its ferocious masters, until in the twelfth century, the Turks taking Cesarea, the whole country fell into their possession ; and has continued under their power ever since. The innumerable scenes of blood and desolation exhibited in this country, have changed it from that happy, fruitful, and prosperous state, so beautifully described in Deuteronomy, to an almost uninhabited desert, and heap of ruins ; few traces of its ancient splendor remain ; and confusion and doubt hang over all the researches of the inquirer.

The present masters exercise unlimited and tyrannical authority over their slaves, in Palestine, keeping the miserable inhabitants in the utmost subjection ; governing them by Caliphs and Bashaws, with rods of iron ; and holding them in the most deplorable ignorance and superstition.

THE HISTORY OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT OF OUR SAVIOUR.

The fact that the four Gospels record the life and instructions of our blessed Lord, is sufficient to induce us to look upon them with the deepest veneration, and to study them with great interest and diligent care. Our Lord can not be said to have made a full development of the Gospel; that was left for the Holy Spirit to accomplish after His ascension, after His redeeming work was finished. But the great truths, facts, and principles of religion; the lost state of man—repentance, faith in Christ, spiritual influence, obedience, the resurrection, final judgment, and eternal happiness or misery —were explicitly stated by our Saviour.

The extraordinary manner in which the Gospels are written demands our notice. We are here made familiar, to speak so, as far as such documents would admit, with our Saviour Himself. We hear His words, we see His actions, we know His conduct, we feel His spirit. His biographers seem only solicitous to set Him forth to our view. Other persons are brought forward, but it is only that His words may be related, and that His conduct may be described.

Two advantages, amongst others, arise from this mode of writing. In the first place, we are led to contemplate our Lord in His holy, peaceful, laborious, patient, and benevolent life, as our Example. This is the great practical lesson. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and went about doing good. In the second place, we see in Him the fulfilment of the prophecies of the O. T.; for let us compare His history, as it is recorded by the Evangelists, with the various predictions of the Prophets, and we behold in Him their exact accomplishment, and this our faith in Him as the Messiah, "as the only Mediator between God and man," is confirmed.

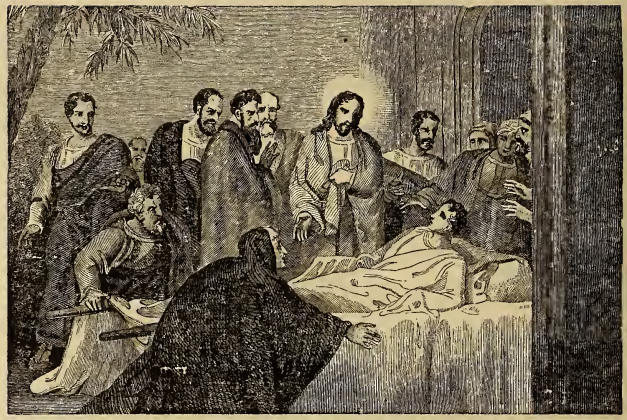
We may add a third advantage arising from this mode of recording the life of our Lord; we see how He conducted Himself in His ministry, addressing different sorts of people



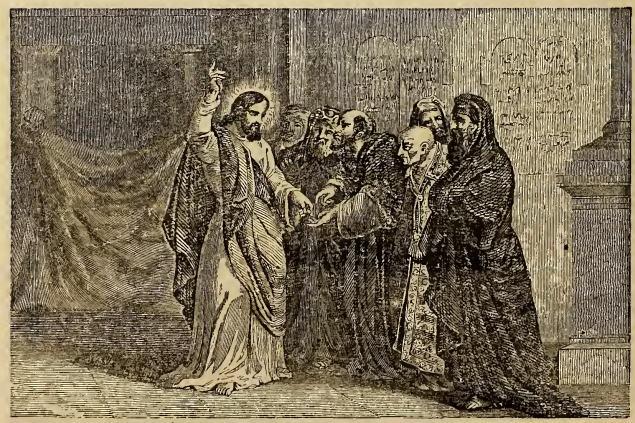
THE ANGELS APPEARING TO THE SHEPHERDS.



THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.



CHRIST RAISING THE WIDOW'S SON.



THE TRIBUTE-MONEY.

in different ways. He observed moral proportions. He taught doctrine, and He also taught practice. He descended to the particulars of the Christian character. He did not teach the higher doctrines of religion in a cold, speculative, and systematic manner. Whatever He taught, He brought it home to the heart and to the life of man.

The miracles of our Lord should always be viewed—1, as proofs of His Divine mission, and of his deity, and, 2, as sources of spiritual instruction. As to the latter view of them, they may be considered as a visible delineation of the invisible operations of the Redeemer's power and grace on the souls of men. It is this spiritual application of them that gives them a peculiar and universal interest. They are, if we may speak so, redemption rendered visible.

The parables of our Lord will not be rightly understood, unless we view them in the universality of their meaning and application. Many of them refer to the whole counsel of God, to the whole history of the Church, to men collectively, while, at the same time, they are applicable to individuals. We put a parable before us: we admire the propriety of its imagery, and the simplicity of its language. This is comparatively nothing. Let us examine how it unfolds the purposes and proceedings of God, the nature and state of the Church, and the character and condition of each of its members, and then we shall find in it instruction of the highest order, both as to others and as to ourselves.

Human nature is accurately unfolded in the Gospels, not merely in the discourses of our Lord, but also in the various characters with which they make us more or less familiar. We see it in the perverseness of most of the Jews, and we see it in the mingled character of the disciples. Hence the proper study of these books will assist us in becoming acquainted with ourselves.

Let us read these sacred pages with such views, and we shall read them with reflection, intelligence, and ample benefit, provided that we implore, and rely upon the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, without which all the rules that we can observe, and all the labor we can employ in our study of sacred things will, as to our salvation, be vain and fruitless. When we read the discourses, the miracles, and the parables of our Lord, when we contemplate His devotion, humility, benevolence, and unwearied labors, let us pray that we may believe in Him as our Saviour, hear Him as our Prophet, obey Him as our King, and follow Him as our Example.

The Gospel of Matthew was written by the Apostle according to the testimony of all antiquity. There has been considerable discussion as to the language in which it was originally composed. Every early writer, however, who mentions that Matthew wrote a Gospel *at all* says that he wrote in Hebrew, that is, in the Syro-Chaldaic.

A characteristic of this Gospel is its constant citations from the O. T. They are about sixty-five in number. The time when the Gospel was written is uncertain. The most probable supposition is that it was written between 50 and 60. It was written for Jewish converts, to show them in Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of the O. T. whom they expected.

There are traces in this Gospel of an occasional superseding of the chronological order. Its principal divisions are: I. The introduction of the ministry of Christ i.–iv. II. The laying down of the new Law for the Church in the Sermon on the Mount, v.–vii. III. Events in historical order, showing Him as the worker of miracles, viii. and ix. IV. The appointment of Apostles to preach the Kingdom, x. V. The doubts and opposition excited by His activity in divers minds—in John's disciples, in sundry cities, in the Pharisees, xi. and xii. VI. A series of parallels on the nature of the kingdom, xiii. VII. Similar to V. The effects of His ministry on His countrymen, on Herod, the people of Gennesaret, Scribes and Pharisees, and on multitudes, whom He feeds, xiii. 53, xvi. 12. VIII. Revelation to His disciples of His sufferings. His instructions to them thereupon, xvi. 13, xviii. 35. IX. Events of a journey to Jerusalem, xix., xx. X. Entrance into Jerusalem and resistance to Him there, and denunciation of the Pharisees, xxi.–xxiii. XI. Last discourses; Jesus as Lord and Judge of Jerusalem, and also of the world, xxiv., xxv. XII. Passion and Resurrection, xxvi.–xxviii.

Mark is generally supposed to be the same with "Marcus" (1 Pet. v. 13), but whether he was the same with John Mark (Acts xv. 37–39; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11), is not clear. The identity is, however, probable. Perhaps he was converted by Peter. He labored ultimately in Egypt, and is said to have founded a church in Alexandria.

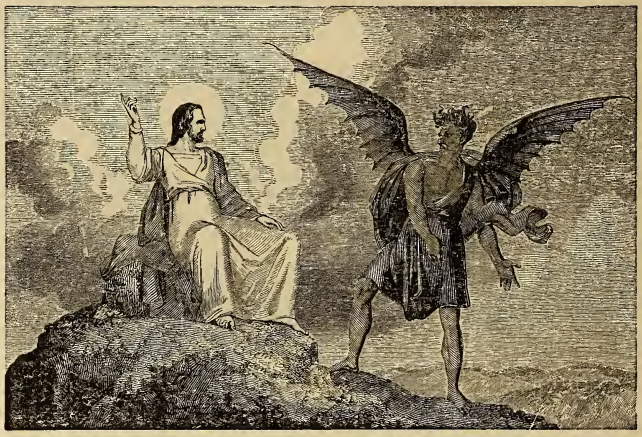
Mark's Gospel, the second in the order of the books of the N. T., is supposed to have been written between A. D. 56 and 65. Mark records chiefly the actions of our Saviour. It is Jesus acting and not Jesus discouring that he portrays. His object is to show how He discharged the duties of the Messiahship. If it was written at Rome and for the Romans, its composition and selection of striking facts is wisely calculated



THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.



THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN IN THE TEMPLE.



THE SECOND TEMPTATION.



NICODEMUS' INTERVIEW WITH CHRIST.

to arrest the attention of such a people—it was suited to their taste and temperament. Fact and not argument most deeply impressed them. It is often supposed, and it has also been asserted, that Mark's Gospel is an abridgment of Matthew's. The idea has no foundation. Mark is shorter than Matthew as a whole, but is longer relatively. It omits many scenes in Matthew, but in detaling those which are found in the record of the first Evangelist, it is more minute, more graphic, more circumstantial, and therefore longer in such sections. Had it been an abridgment, there would have been more appearance of harmony in arrangement and chronology.

The old tradition is, that Mark wrote this Gospel at Peter's request or dictation. Thus it is said by Papias, an early disciple: "Mark being the interpreter (amanuensis) of Peter, wrote exactly whatever he remembered, but he did not write in order. . . . . Mark committed no mistake when he wrote down circumstances as he recollected them." Irenæus says, "Mark the disciple and interpreter of Peter, has given us, in writing, the things which had been preached by Peter." Origen and Clement agree in this opinion. So do Eusebius and Jerome.

The city of Rome was probably the place of this Gospel's composition. We find some Latin words in it, only disguised by being written in Greek characters. He explains several of the Jewish customs. The Jewish phrase "defiled hands," he explains by saying, "that is, unwashen hands." The Gospel of Mark is an independent, original publication. There are a sufficient number of important differences between this Gospel and the other three, to show that this is not an abridgment or compilation from them, or either of them, and among these we may mention two miracles which are not recorded in any other Gospel, and yet there are but twenty-four verses in Mark which contain any important fact not mentioned by some other evangelist.

The third Gospel is ascribed, by the general consent of ancient Christendom, to "the beloved physician," Luke, the friend and companion of the Apostle Paul. From Acts i. 1, it is clear that the Gospel described as "the former treatise" was written before the Acts of the Apostles, but how much earlier is uncertain. Perhaps it was written at Cæsarea during Paul's imprisonment there, A. D. 58–60. The preface, contained in the first four verses of the Gospel, describes the object of its writer.

The Evangelist professes to write that Theophilus "might know the certainty of those things wherein he had been

instructed" (i. 4). This Theophilus was probably a native of Italy, and perhaps an inhabitant of Rome, for in tracing Paul's journey to Rome, places which an Italian might be supposed not to know are described minutely (Acts xxvii. 8, 12, 16), but when he comes to Sicily and Italy this is neglected. Hence it would apper that the person for whom Luke wrote in the first instance was a Gentile reader, and accordingly we find traces in the Gospel of a leaning towards Gentile rather than Jewish converts.

It has never been doubted that the Gospel was written in Greek. Whilst Hebraisms are frequent, classical idioms and Greek compound-words abound. The number of words used by Luke only is unusually great, and many of them are compound-words for which there is classical authority. On comparing the Gospel with the Acts it is found that the style of the latter is more pure and free from Hebrew idioms.

This Gospel contains: 1. A preface (i. 1–4). 2. An account of the time preceding the ministry of Jesus (i. 5 to ii. 52). 3. Several accounts of discourses and acts of our Lord, common to Luke, Matthew, and Mark, related for the most part in their order, and belonging to Capernaum and the neighborhood (iii. 1 to ix. 50). 4. A collection of similar accounts, referring to a certain journey to Jerusalem, most of them peculiar to Luke (xi. 51 to xviii. 14). 5. An account of the sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus, common to Luke with the other Evangelists, except as to some of the accounts of what took place after the Resurrection (xviii. 15 to the end).

John, the Evangelist and the Apostle, was the son of Zebedee, a fisherman of the town or Bethsaida; his mother's name was Salome. He seems to have possessed a temper singularly mild, amiable and affectionate; and he was eminently the object of our Lord's regard and confidence. Some learned men have viewed his Gospel as controversial, written against Corinthus and other heretics. He possibly may refer to these: but too much importance perhaps has been attached to this idea. His narrative is characterized by singular perspicuity, and the most unaffected simplicity and benevolence. The following quotations from Bishop Bloomfield's Lectures will give a just idea of this Gospel, when viewed with reference to the three preceding Gospels: "The Gospel of John was written several years after those of the other evangelists, and evidently with a different object. They relate the principal incidents of our Saviour's life; John is more diligent in recording his discourses. The other evangelists enumerate a great variety of miracles; John describes only a few of the



"He told me all that ever I did."

CHRIST AND THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.



"His wine was for him, his oil was for him."

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.



"I have need to be baptized of Thee."

CHRIST COMING TO JOHN TO BE BAPTIZED.



"Peace be to thee; stand up."

most remarkable, which had a more immediate reference to the object of his Gospel. They repeat the discourses which Jesus held with the people, mostly in Galilee, in the form of parables, and short moral sentences; John has preserved the longer and more argumentative conversations of our Saviour with the learned Jews, on the subject of the Messiah; and those in which He explained to His disciples the nature of His mission and office." "Whatever other objects John may have had in view, this was one—to convey to the Christian world just and adequate notions of the real nature, character, and office, of that great Teacher who came to instruct and redeem mankind. For this purpose he studiously selected for his narrative those passages of our Saviour's life which most clearly displayed His Divine power and authority, and those of His discourses, in which He spoke most plainly of His own nature and of the efficacy of His death, as an atonement for the sins of the world." "The real difference between the other evangelists and John is, that they wrote a history of our Saviour's life; but John of His person and office." Whoever then desires to form a just notion of the real office and dignity of the Saviour of the world let him study the representations which Jesus has given of Himself in the discourses recorded by John. The Apostles speak of Him in their epistles, it is true, in noble and characteristic expressions; but *here* the Saviour speaks of Himself, and in language which no ingenuity can pervert.

The "Acts of the Apostles" is an inspired history of the actions and sufferings of the Apostles at or after the ascension of their adored Master. It chiefly relates those of Peter, John, Paul, and Barnabas. It gives us a particular account of Christ's ascension, of the choice of Matthias in the place of Judas; of the effusion of the Holy Ghost at the feast of Pentecost, of the miraculous preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles, and the success thereof, and their persecutions on that account (ch. i. to v.), of the choice of the deacons, the persecution and murder of Stephen, one of them (ch. vi.–vii), of a more general persecution and dispersion of the Christian preachers into Samaria, and places adjacent; of the baptism and baseness of Simon the sorcerer, and the conversion and baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (ch. viii.); of Peter's raising Dorcas to life, preaching to and baptizing the Gentiles of Cornelius' family, and vindication of his conduct herein (ch. ix. 32–43, x., xi. 1–18); of the spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles by the dispersed preachers, and the contributions for the saints at Jerusalem in the time of a dearth (ch. xi. 19–29); of

Herod's murder of James, imprisonment of Peter, and fearful death (ch. xii.) ; of the council held at Jerusalem, which condemned the imposition of Jewish ceremonies, and advised to avoid offence of the weak, to forbear eating of meats offered to idols, or of things strangled, or blood (ch. xv.). The rest of the book relates the conversion, labors, and sufferings of Paul (ch. ix. 1–31, xiii., xiv., xvi. to the end). It contains the history of the planting and regulation of the Christian church for about thirty years. Nor have we any other for 250 years after, that deserves our belief. This large gap between inspired history and that of human authority, which deserves credit, Providence no doubt ordered, that our faith and practice relative to the concerns of the church should stand, not in the wisdom of man, but in the truth and power of God.

The epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans is put the first, though it is the fifth or sixth in the order of time, either from the preëminence of Rome, as being then the mistress of the world,or because it is the largest and most comprehensive of Paul's epistles. It is not known by whom the Gospel was first preached at Rome. The Christians there being partly Jews, and partly Gentiles, the former had strong prejudices about their peculiar privileges, and the latter claimed equal privileges with them ; hence contentions arose. Paul wrote this epistle to compose their differences, and in it he unfolds the nature of the Gospel, and shows the purposes and measures of God respecting the Jewish and Gentile world. He shows the guilty state of all men, confutes the objections of the Jews, explains the doctrines of Justification and Sanctification, dwells on the happiness of true believers, asserts the calling of the Gentiles into the Christian Church, and inculcates moral and civil obedience.

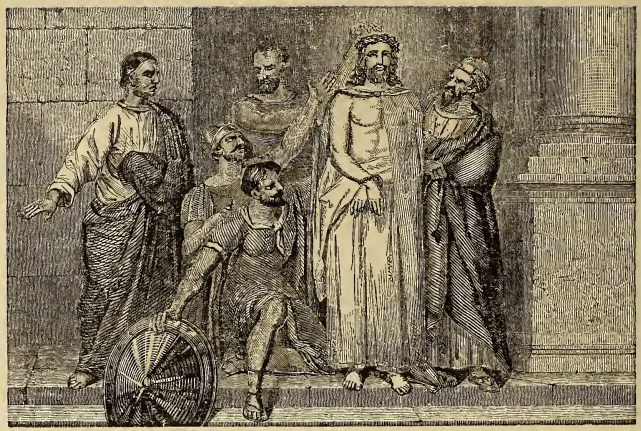
There are four portions of this epistle (ch. v. 12–21, vii., viii. 28–30 and ix.) which may with propriety be pointed out as being, in the present state of our knowledge, peculiarly difficult. The mere fact that very different views are taken of them by able men, and that systems of opinion directly opposed to each other have been built upon them, or supported by them, is a proof, to say the least, that they are not of easy interpretation. While this epistle contains the fullest and most systematic exposition of the Apostle's *teaching*, it is at the same time a very striking expression of his *character*. Nowhere does his earnest and affectionate nature, and his tact and delicacy in handling unwelcome topics appear more strongly than when he is dealing with the rejection of his fellow-countrymen, the Jews.



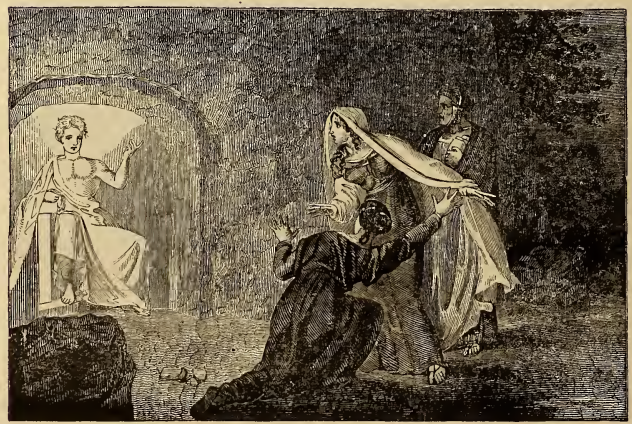
THE ANNUNCIATION.



ST. JOHN.



CHRIST CROWNED WITH THORNS.



THE THREE WOMEN AT THE TOMB OF CHRIST.

Corinth was the metropolis of Achaia proper. It abounded in riches and elegance, in luxury and voluptuousness, so that its inhabitants became infamous to a proverb. Christianity was planted there by Paul himself (Acts xviii. 1–11); and he was succeeded by Apollos (Acts xviii. 27, 28, xix. 1). The Church consisted partly of Jews and partly of Gentiles, but chiefly of the latter; hence, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians Paul combats with Jewish superstition and heathen licentiousness. Soon after he had quitted the Church, its peace was disturbed by false teachers. Two parties were formed; the one contending for Jewish ceremonies, and the other misinterpreting Christian liberty, and indulging in shameful excesses. Hence his object in this Epistle is twofold; to apply suitable remedies to the disorders and abuses which had crept into the Church, and to answer those points in which (ch. vii. 1) they had requested his advice and information. This has been called "the most elegant of the Epistles." It undeniably is a most masterly and accomplished composition, displaying the great dexterity of the writer in a very difficult case; and though much refers to customs and practices no longer in existence, yet the whole is of universal application and of perpetual use.

The effect produced by the first Epistle differed from that of the second. Some of the Corintian Christians had been brought to repentance, and to an amendment of their ways, to submission to the Apostle's orders, and to a good disposition towards him. Some still adhered to the false teacher, and denied the Apostolical authority of Paul. He was charged with lenity and irresolution of conduct, with pride and severity on account of his treatment of the incestuous person, with arrogance and vain-glory in his ministry, in which he lessened the authority of the law, and with being personally contemptible. Hence he vindicates himself and his conduct against all the arguments of his adversaries; and the different circumstances of the Church account for the tenderness and severity which he exhibits. Conscious of the goodness of his cause, he speaks of himself more freely, and justifies himself more boldly, and confutes his opponents with solid arguments. The whole work is strongly impressed with meekness and modesty, decision and energy, firmness and kindness, with affection the most pure, and irony the most keen. He accounts for his not having come to them, he declares his sentence against the incestuous person to have been neither rigid nor tyrannical, but necessary and pious; he intimates his success in preaching the Gospel and shows the superiorty of the Gospel, the ministration

of righteousness to the law, the ministration of death; he stirs them up to a holy life; he excites them to finish their contribution for their poorer brethren in Judea, and he apologizes for himself with respect to the contemptibleness imputed to him, asserting his authority, enumerating his labors, and appealing to "visions and revelations." Though this Epistle was thus limited and temporary with respect to its primary object, yet it abounds throughout with invaluable instructions (whether it refers to the character of good or wicked men, or to the development of the nature and spirit of the Gospel), which will never be obsolete.

Galatia was a large province in the centre of Asia Minor. It derived its name from the Gauls, who conquered the country and settled in it, about 280 B. C.; it was called also Gallo-Græcia, on account of the Greek colonists who afterwards became intermingled with them. About 189 B. C. it fell under the power of Rome, and became a Roman province, 26 B. C. The inhabitants were but partially civilized, and their system of idolatry was extremely gross and debasing. Paul and Silas traveled through this region about A. D. 51, and formed Churches in it, which Paul visited again in his second journey, three years afterwards. His epistle to the Galatians was probably written soon after his first visit: see Acts, xvi. 6, xviii. 23; Gal. i, 6, 8, iv. 13, 19.

The epistle may be divided into three parts:

1. After his usual salutation, Paul asserts his full and independent authority as an Apostle of Christ: he relates the history of his conversion and introduction into the ministry, showing that he had received his knowledge of Christian truth, not by any human teaching, but by immediate revelations, and that the other Apostles had recognized his Divine commission, and treated him as their equal (i. 2).

2. In support of his doctrine, that men are accepted of God by faith alone, and not by the rites and ceremonies of the law, he appeals to the experience of the Galatians, since their conversion to Christianity, and to the case of Abraham, who had been justified and saved by faith, and shows that the design of the law was not to supersede the Divine covenant of promise previously made with Abraham, but to prepare the way, and to exhibit the necessity for the Gospel (iii). He draws a contrast between the state of pupilage and the subjection of the people of God under the law, and their happier condition under the Gospel, when, by the redemption of the Son of God, they were put into possession of the privileges and blessings of sonship; and addressing that portion of the





MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.



STEPHEN STONED TO DEATH.

Galatians that had been heathens, he reminds them that, having been rescued from the far more degrading bondage of idolatry, it was especially deplorable that they should fall back into the slavery of superstition (iv. 1–2). He tenderly appeals to them as his spiritual children, reminding them of their former attachment to him ; and then, addressing those who relied upon the law and the letter of the O. T., shows them that the history of Abraham's two sons afforded an emphatic illustration of the relative position and spirit of the two contending parties. and of the rejection of the one, and the blessedness of the other (iv. 2–31).

3. He exhorts the believers to stand firm in their Christian liberty, but not to abuse it, shows them that holiness of heart and life is secured under the Gospel by the authority of Christ and the grace of the Holy Spirit (v.), and enjoins upon them mutual forbearance, tenderness, love and liberality, and, after again condemning the doctrine of the false teachers, closes his epistle with a declaration which may be regarded as the sum of the whole.

Ephesus was the chief city of Asia on this side Mt. Taurus, and was celebrated for the temple of Diana (Acts xix. 27). The Gospel was first planted here by Paul (Acts xviii. xix). He wrote his epistle to the Ephesians during his imprisonment at Rome. We may suppose him to have been apprehensive lest advantage should be taken of his confinement to unsettle the minds of the Ephesian converts, who were mostly Gentiles. He therefore wrote this Epistle to establish them in the faith, giving them the most exalted views of the love of God, of the dignity and excellency of Christ, and fortifying their minds against the scandal of the Cross. He shows that miserable as their state had been, they now had equal privileges with the Jews, and he urges them to walk in a manner becoming their profession. This has been pronounced the richest and noblest of the Epistles, and certainly in variety of depth and doctrine, sublimity of metaphor, and animated fervor of style, occasionally rising to what has been called rapture, and Apostolic earnestness and exhortation, both as to doctrine and as to a life becoming the Christian profession, it stands unrivalled. The Apostle had no rebukes to utter, no controversy to engage in, and therefore with a noble mind and a warm heart, he expatiates freely, with sublime thought and copious expressions, on his subject, the unsearchable wisdom of God in the redemption of man, and his love towards the Gentiles, in making them through faith partakers of the benefits of the death of Christ.

A tie of particular affection seems to have existed between the Apostle Paul and the Philippian Church. In their city he had suffered grievous wrong at the hands of the heathen magistrates, and from the disciples there he had, contrary to the general custom, twice accepted gifts soon after his departure from them (Phil. iv. 15, 16; comp. 2, Cor. viii. 1–6). Nor, when the Apostle was far away a prisoner at Rome, did the Philippians forget him. They sent him a present by Epaphroditus (Phil. iv. 18), on whose return he dispatched his Epistle to them, pouring out his heart in warm affection towards those who had so tenderly shown their love to him.

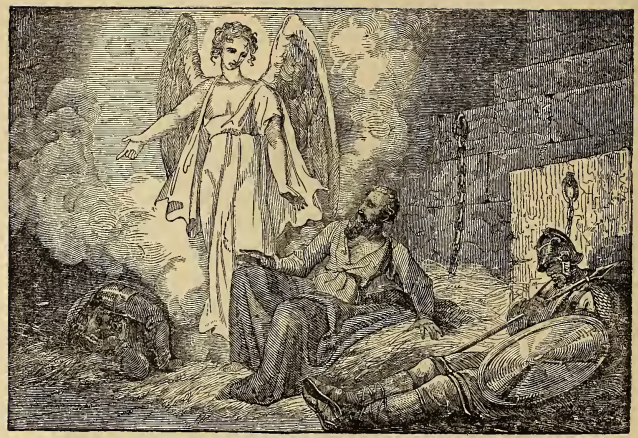
We may arrange this epistle in three sections. I. After an affectionate introduction (i. 1–11), the Apostle gives an account of his condition at Rome (12–26), and then exhorts to unanimity and Christian humility (27–ii. 16), adding an expression of his hope of visiting them, with a notice of Epaphroditus's sickness and recovery (17–30). II. The Apostle cautions the Philippians against Judaizing teachers, and confirms his warning by a special reference to his own experience, and thence, having shown how he renounced all self-dependence, he takes occasion to exhort to heavenliness of mind (iii. 1–iv. 1). III. He gives various admonitions (2–9), then expresses his thanks for the present sent him (10–20), and concludes with salutation and a benediction (21–23).

This Epistle is referred to by Polycarp, and cited by Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria, and other early writers. The style is animated and affectionate, occasionally abrupt, but in a strain of almost unqualified commendation. By reason of the influence of certain Judaizers there, there were, indeed, some tokens of disagreement, and therefore the Apostle earnestly presses unity upon them, but his admonitions are conceived and expressed in the tenderest spirit. They were, we may trust, not ineffective.

Colosse was one of the chief cities of Phrygia, which, at the date of the Epistle to the Colossians, was a very rich and fertile country, though now under the Moslem yoke, and, in a great measure, uncultivated. Phrygia was twice visited by Paul (Acts xvi. 8, xviii. 23), but whether he reached Colosse is doubted. The tenor of the Epistle favors the conclusion that he did not (see especially ii. 1); but it is certain that he knew several of the Colossian Christians, of whom Archippus, their minister, and Philemon are expressly named. The Colossians, having heard of Paul's imprisonment, sent to him Epaphras, their minister, to comfort the Apostle, and to inform



CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN.



PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.



CHRIST PRAYING IN THE GARDEN.

him of their state. Epaphras, shortly after reaching Rome, was also imprisoned (Philemon 24). This Epistle was written during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome (i. 24, iv, 18).

It is evident that there is a very close connection between this inspired treatise and the epistle to the Ephesians. They are twin productions, written about the same period. Many similar expressions occur in both, showing that the condition of both churches was somewhat alike Epaphras had come to Rome, and given the Apostle information as to the state of the Christian communities in Asia Minor, and seeing the immediate danger of the Colossian Church, Paul wrote this letter. The Apostle begins by a reference to his own high office, and to the character and destiny of the Christians whom he purposed to address. Then the mention of Christ's name suggested to him the exalted glory and Divine dignity of the Redeemer, who is Himself Creator, Preserver, and Lord of the physical and spiritual universe, whose death is our reconciliation, and the knowledge of which is the prime mystery at last revealed to the world. The writer then passes on to theories which are endangering the purity and stability of the Colossian Church, and warns the Colossians against the seduction of a proud philosophy and vain asceticism, which were selfish in their origin, and ruinous in their consequences. Then follow exhortations suited to their circumstances, and cautions against sins too prevalent in the ancient world. The epistle closes with many salutations, showing the deep interest which the writer cherished for their spiritual welfare.

The spirit of the great Apostle of the Gentiles breathes in every sentence of this pithy and earnest composition. Ardor undamped by imprisonment, interest unchilled by distance, zeal for the purity and simplicity of the Gospel, uncompromising to all who introduce rash speculation or vile and unscriptural vagaries, whether under the shape of higher wisdom or superior sanctity, are indubitable traits of Paul's character, and unmistakable features of the epistle to the Colossians.

When Paul was obliged to quit Thessalonia he went to Athens. Anxious to visit the Thessalonians again, he found himself unable (1 Thess. ii. 18), and in consequence sent Timothy (iii. 1, 2). When Timothy rejoined him at Corinth (Acts xviii. 1–5 ; 1 Thess. iii. 6), he wrote the *first* epistle to the Thessalonians. It is distinctly cited by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian.

The epistle consists of two main parts. I. After an inscription (i. 1) Paul celebrates the grace of God in their conversion

and advancement in the faith (2–ii. 16), and then expresses his desire to see them and his affectionate solicitude for them (17 iii. 13). II. In the hortatory part he calls to holiness and brotherly love (iv. 1–12) he speaks of Christ's advent (13 –v. 11), and adds various admonitions (12–24). He then concludes with a charge that the Epistle be generally read, with greetings, and a benediction (25–28).

This is the earliest of Paul's letters, and may be dated at the end of 52 or beginning of 53 A. D.

The *second* Epistle to the Thessalonians was written not long after the first; for Silas and Timothy were still with him (2 Thess. i. 1), probably in 53 A. D., and from the same place, Corinth. The evidence for it is even yet more conclusive than for the first. It is alluded to by Polycarp, cited by Irenænus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian. This letter is supplementary to the first. That had been in some measure misapprehended, and the coming of Christ was taken to be close at hand. Moreover, an unauthorized use had been made of the Apostle's name. He therefore wrote to correct the mistake, and to check the evil results which had flowed from it in disorderly conduct.

This Epistle comprises, besides the inscription and conclusion, three sections. I. A thanksgiving and prayer for the Thessalonians (i. 3–12). II. The rectification of their mistake, and the doctrine of the man of sin (ii). III. Sundry admonitions (1) to prayer, with a confident expression of his hope respecting them (iii. 1–5); (2) to correct the disorderly (6–15). He then concludes with salutation and apostolical benediction, adding a remarkable authentication of his letters (16–18).

The style of these Epistles is for the most part plain and quiet, save, as might be expected, in the prophetic section (iii. 1–12).

The first and second Epistles to Timothy are the fifteenth and sixteenth in order of the books of the N. T. The first is supposed to have been written about the year 60, and contains special instructions respecting the qualifications and the duties of sundry ecclesiastical officers, and other persons, and the most affectionate and pungent exhortations of faithfulness. The second Epistle was written a year or two later, and while Paul was in constant expectation of martyrdom (2 Tim. iv. 6–8), and may be regarded as the dying counsel of the venerable apostolic father to his son in the Lord. It contains a variety of injunctions as to the duties of Christians under trials and temptations, and concludes with expressions of a full and triumphant faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in all the glorious promises made to his true followers.



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CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.



PAUL SHIPWRECKED.

These two Epistles are full of interesting matter, not only to pastors of churches, but to all members of the Christian community. What peace, harmony, and spirituality would characterize the Church if the affectionate counsels of these Epistles were fully acted on!

In chapter iii. of the first Epistle, there is an appropriateness not always perceived in the last two verses. The church is styled by the Apostle, the *Pillar* of the Truth, and as inscriptions were written on pillars, so the last verse of the chapter is composed of *stichoi*, to suit such an inscription:

GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS:
GOD.
WAS MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH,
JUSTIFED IN THE SPIRIT,
SEEN BY THE ANGELS,
PROCLAIMED AMONG THE GENTILES,
BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD,
RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY.

Ephesus was famous for its pillars and inscriptions. The reading, "God," in the above question, has been controverted and often examined. The MSS., versions, and quotations, are all in favor of the reading God. If the reading "who was manifest," be adopted, the meaning is the same, for the antecedent is "God," in the preceding verse.

It is by no means certain from what place Paul wrote his Epistle to Titus. But as he desires Titus to come to him at Nicopolis (iii. 12), and declares his intention of passing the winter there, some have supposed that when he wrote it, he was in the neighborhood of that city, either in Greece or Macedonia, others have imagined that he wrote it from Colosse, but it is difficult to say upon what ground. It was probably written in the year 64, after Paul's first imprisonment at Rome.

The principle design of this Epistle was to give instructions to Titus concerning the management of the Churches in the different cities of the island of Crete, and it was probably intended to be read publicly to the Cretans, that they might know on what authority Titus acted. Paul, after his usual salutation, intimates that he was appointed an Apostle by the express command of God, and reminds Titus of the reason of his being left in Crete; he describes the qualifications for bishops, and cautions him against persons of bad principles, especially against Judaizing teachers, whom he directs Titus to reprove with severity (i); he informs him what instructions he should give to people in different situations of life, and exhorts him to be exemplary in his own

conduct; he points out the pure and practical nature of the Gospel (ii.), and enumerates some particular virtues which he was to inculcate, avoiding foolish questions and frivolous disputes, he tells him how he is to behave towards heretics, and concludes with salutations (iii.).

The Epistle to Philemon was written by Paul from Rome, where he was detained as a prisoner. Onesimus, a servant of Philemon, had fled to that city, and was there converted to the faith of the Gospel. Paul had begotten him in his bonds. Being about to return to Philemon, Paul wrote this letter, chiefly with a design to conciliate the feelings of Philemon towards his penitent servant, and now fellow-disciple. The slave may have apprehended the infliction of such a penalty as in slave countries is usually inflicted on runaways. Paul sent him back, not because Philemon might claim him, but to show the altered position in which Chrlstianity had placed him. The Apostle pleads for his reception (though he might have enjoined it), pleads from his old age and suffering, the personal friendship of Philemon, and his instrumentality in his conversion, and held himself bound for any debt which Onesimus might be owing his master. The letter has been regarded by learned critics as a master-piece of epistolary composition. An eminent critic of ancient days says of it: "The Apostle craves pardon in behalf of a fugitive and pilfering slave, whom he sends back to his master: but while pleading his cause, he discourses with so much weight respecting the rules of Christian kindness, that he seems to be consulting for the whole Church, rather than managing the business of a particular individual. He intercedes for the humble man so modestly and submissively, as to show, more clearly than almost anywhere else, the gentleness of his nature, which is here drawn to the life."

Who the Hebrews were is not agreed among the learned; but most probably they were the Jewish Christians resident in Palestine. Though the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is not mentioned, the evidence of its having been written by Paul is so strong that we cannot reasonably doubt of its being with justice ascribed to him. It is directly opposed to the peculiar errors and prejudices of the Jews, proving with great solidity of argument and by such arguments as were well understood by the Jews, that the religion of Jesus is far more excellent and perfect than that of Moses. Its object is to show the Deity of Jesus Christ, and the superior excellency of the Gospel when compared with the Mosaical institution, to prevent the Jewish converts from relapsing to abolished rites



JACOB'S WELL.—SHECHEM.

JACOB'S WELL. Is in a low spur of Mt. Gerizim, at the mouth of the valley of Shechem. "Formerly there was a square hole opening into a carefully built vaulted chamber, 10 ft. sq., in the floor of which was the true mouth of the well. Now a part of the vault has fallen in, and completely covered up the mouth, so that it looks like a shallow pit." The well is 9 feet diameter, circular, cut through limestone rock nearly 100 feet deep. It sometimes has water in it, but is often quite dry. There was a small church over it in the 4th century, and to the southwest there are a few shapeless ruins still left.

and ceremonies, and to exhort them to perseverance in the faith after the example of the ancient believers. The whole is interspersed with warnings and exhortations to different sorts of persons. This Epistle connects the Old and New Testaments in the most convincing manner, and elucidates both more fully than any other Epistle. There, too, the great doctrines of the New Testament are stated, proved, and adapted to practical purposes in the most impressive manner. We often speak of the offices of Christ, under a three-fold division of them, the kingly, prophetical, and sacerdotal offices. It is the last of these which is particularly unfolded in this Epistle, in which we are principally led to consider the Sacrifice and Atonement which He made, His dignity and sufficiency as priest, and the prevalence of His intercession, These matters are elucidated by being put in contrast with the Levitical ordinances, of which they were the antitype. It is by the careful study of this Epistle, with an immediate examination of the different facts to which Paul refers in the Old Testament, that we form a right view of the great doctrine of the Atonement, that we rightly understand the nature and design of the great dispensations of God, the ritual and the spiritual, and that we rightly estimate our privileges under the Christian Dispensation.

The author of the Epistle of James, if not James the Son of Zebedee, which is very unlikely, must be that prominent James, who was most probably the son of Alpheus, and the Lord's brother. He addressed it to Hebrew Christians of the dispersion (James i. 1), to those primarily that were scattered throughout Judea (Acts viii. 4), but with a further purpose of reaching generally those of Abraham's seed who anywhere had embraced the faith of Christ. His object was to fortify the minds of the disciples against the trials to which, for their faith, they were exposed, and to warn them against the sins of which, as Jews, they were especially in danger.

Bengel divides this Epistle into three parts: I. The inscription (i. 1). II. The exhortation (i. 2–v. 18), enforcing (1) patience against external trials and inward temptations (i. 2–15), (2) and then, from regard to the Divine goodness (16–18), the importance of being "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to walk" (19–21); the special admonitions for each being that *hearing* must be accompanied by doing (22–25), in silence (26), with compassion and self-denial (27), without regard to persons in public assemblies (ii. 1–13), so that generally faith must not be separated from works (14–26), that *speech* must be bridled (iii. 1–12), that *wrath.* with other

swelling passions, must be restrained (13–iv. 17); (3) patience again, which the coming of the Judge, with the consequent destruction of the wicked (v. 1–6), and the deliverence of the just (7–12) should encourage, and which prayer will cherish (13–18). III. The conclusion in which the Apostle, having shown his care for the spiritual welfare of those he addresses, would have them diligent for the salvation of others (19, 20).

The time when this Epistle was composed is uncertain; some place it early, A. D. 45, others think its date later, perhaps 61 or 62. A. D. Some persons think that this Epistle does not harmonize with the Epistles of Paul. On this topic little can be here said. The two Apostles had each his own aspect of a cardinal truth, and their expressions have reference to the especial need of those they respectively addressed. Paul vindicates the power of a living faith, James shows that if it be not a living faith it is worthless. The two are not at variance. The style of this Epistle is earnest, the Greek comparatively free from Hebraisms.

It is doubted whether the first Epistle General of John was written only to the dispersed Hebrew Christians, afflicted on their dispersion, or to Christians in general, whether Jews or Gentiles. It was written from Babylon, but whether by Babylon he meant Rome, figuratively so named, or ancient Babylon, or a city of that name in Egypt, does not seem to be a point of easy determination. The Christians, it seems, were exposed to severe persecutions, and the design of the Epistle is to support them under afflictions and trials, and to instruct them how to behave in the midst of opposition and cruelty, with which they were treated, submissive to civil authority, attentive to their duties in their several stations, and leading blameless and exemplary lives. It has been said of this Epistle, that it is sparing in words, but full of sense, majestic, and one of the finest books of the New Testament. Peter writes in it with such energy and rapidity of style that we can scarcely perceive the pause in his discourses, or the distinction of his periods. Little solicitous about the choice of words, or the harmonious disposition of them, his thought and his heart were absorbed in the grand truth which he was Divinely commissioned to proclaim, and the indispensable obligation of Christians to adorn their profession with a holy life.

I. Clement of Rome and Hermas refer to the second General Epistle of Peter; it is mentioned by Origen and Eusebius, and has been universally received since the fourth century, except by the Syriac Christians. II. It is addressed to the same persons as the former Epistle, and the design of

it was to encourage them to adhere to the genuine faith and practice of the Gospel. It was written when the Apostle foresaw that his death was at no great distance, and he might hope that advice and instruction given under such circumstances would have the greater weight. As he is supposed to have suffered martyrdom in the year 65, we may place the date of this Epistle in the beginning of that year, It was probably written from Rome. III. Peter, after saluting the Christian converts and representing the glorious promises of the Gospel dispensation, exhorts them to cultivate those virtues and graces which would make their calling and election sure; he expresses his anxiety to remind them of their duty at a time when he was conscious of his approaching end; he declares the divine origin of the Christian faith, which was attested by a voice from heaven and by the sure words of prophesy; he foretells the sure rise of heresies and false doctrines, and denounces severe judgments against those who shall desert the truth, while they who adhere to it will be spared, as Noah and Lot were in former times; he assures his Christian brethren that the object of this, and of his former Epistle, was to urge them to observe the precepts which they had received; he cautions them against false teachers, represents the certainty of the Day of Judgment, reminds them of the doctrines which he and Paul had inculcated, and exhorts them to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Some learned men have thought that the style of the second chapter of this Epistle is materially different from that of the other two chapters, and have therefore suspected its genuineness. We must own that we observe no other difference than of the subjects. The subject of the second chapter may surely lead us to suppose that the pen of the Apostle was guided by a higher degree of Inspiration than when written in a didactic manner. It is written with the animation and energy of the prophetic style, but there does not appear to us to be anything, either in phrase or sentiment, inconsistent with the acknowledged writings of Peter. Bishop Sherlock was of opinion that in this chapter Peter adopted the sentiment and language of some Jewish author who had described the false teachers of his own times. This conjecture is entirely unsupported by ancient authority, and it is in itself very highly improbable.

At what place the three Epistles of John were written, can not be accurately determined. The first of them is not, properly speaking, an Epistle, but rather a didactic discourse upon the principles of Christianity in doctrine and practice; opening sublimely with the fundamental topics of God's

perfection, and man's depravity and Christ's propitiation; perspicuously propounding the deepest mysteries of our holy faith, maintaining the sanctity of its precepts with energy of argument, and exhibiting in all its parts the most dignified simplicity of language—artless simplicity and benevolence blended with singular ardor and modesty—together with a wonderful sublimity of sentiment, are the characteristics of this treatise. The sentences considered separately, are exceedingly clear, but when we search for the connection we frequently meet with difficulties. The principal object seems to be to inculcate brotherly love, and to caution Christians against erroneous and licentious tenets, principles and conduct. An affectionate spirit pervades the whole, but when the writer exposes false teachers and hypocrites, we discern a Boanerges. This treatise abounds more than any other book of the N. T. with criteria, by which Christians may soberly examine themselves whether they be in the faith.

It is uncertain to whom the second Epistle of John was addressed. The most probable opinion is that it was addressed to the Lady Electa, who is supposed to have been some eminent Christian matron. It is an epitome of the first Epistle. The Lady Electa is commended for the religious education of her children, is exhorted to abide in the doctrine of Christ, and to avoid the delusion of false teachers, and is urged to the practice of Christian love and charity.

The third Epistle of John, probably written about the same time as the preceding, is addressed to a converted Gentile, but it is uncertain who Gaius was. The object of the Epistle was, to commend his steadfastness in the faith, and his hospitality, to caution him against the ambition and turbulent practices of Diotrephes, and to recommend Demetrius to his friendship. It is not known who Diotrephes or Demetrius were.

Jude, or Judas, surnamed Thaddeus, or Lebbeus, was son of Alpheus, brother of James the Less, and one of the twelve Apostles. The only particular incident related of him is in John xiv. 21–23. The time when, and the place where his General Epistle was written, is uncertain. The coincidence between it and chapter ii. of Peter's second Epistle, renders it likely that it was written soon after that Epistle. There is much diversity of opinion about the persons to whom it was addressed; it probably relates to all who had received the Gospel. The design of it was to guard believers against false teachers, of whom he gives an awful description, laboring for words and images to impart to the reader an adequate idea of that profligate character. His expressions are strong, his

language animated, and his figures and comparisons bold, apt, and striking. The whole shows how deeply the Apostle was grieved at the scandalous immoralities of those wicked men, who under the mask of religion, were most abandoned persons.

The Book of Revelation is the last in the order of the books of the Bible, and is commonly called the Apocalypse, from a Greek word which signifies *revelations*. It is supposed to have been written about the years 95–96. It is the design of this book to present a prophetic history of the Church. It is called the Revelation of St. John the Divine, because to him was more fully revealed the Divine counsels than to any other prophet under the Christian dispensation. It has been observed that hardly any one book has received more early, more authentic, and more lasting attestations to its genuineness than this. But its canonical authority has sometimes been called in question. The fanatical rhapsodies of the ancient millennarians led many to call in question the authority of that book on which their reveries were based. This was wrong. If the Chiliasts misinterpreted the Apocalypse their opponents should have shown the absurdities of their expositions, and not have thrown discredit upon the Apocalypse itself. The current of external evidence is wholly in its favor. Ignatius, Polycarp, Melito, Origen, Clement, and Tertullian refer to it as a portion of inspiration. That John the Apostle was its author was fully believed in ancient times. There is a great similarity of style between the Apocalypse and the fourth Gospel.

It seems to have been written to comfort the early Churches under persecution, and its keynote is the success of the new religion over every opposition. It is but an expanded illustration of the first great promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." Its figures and symbols are august and impressive, and remind us of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. It is full of prophetic grandeur, awful in hieroglyphics and mystic symbols: seven seals opened, seven trumpets sounded, seven vials poured out, mighty antagonists arrayed against Christianity; hostile powers, full of malignity, against the new religion, and, for a season, oppressing it, but at length defeated and annihilated; the darkened heaven, tempestuous sea, convulsed earth fighting against them, while the issue of the long combat is the universal reign of peace, and truth, and righteousness; the whole scene being relieved at intervals by a choral burst to God the Creator, and Christ the Redeemer and Governor. The book must bave been so far intelligible to the readers for whom it was first designed,

or it could not have yielded them either hope or comfort. It is also full of Christ. It exhibits His glory as Redeemer and Governor, and describes that deep and universal homage and praise which the "Lamb that was slain" is forever receiving before the throne. Either Christ is God, or the saints and angels are guilty of idolatry. It would far exceed our space to recount the many and opposing interpretations that have been given of this book in ancient and modern times. Some are simple and some are complex; some looking upon it as almost fulfilled, and others regarding the greater portion of it as yet to be accomplished. Between Mede, Faber and Elliot on the one hand, and Lucke and Stuart on the other, there stretches a wide gulf. In the hands of its expositors it resembles a musical instrument, there being no variation or fantasia which may not be played upon it. Some authors find its fulfilment in Constantine's elevation, others in Luther's Reformation. One discerns its completion in the French Revolution, and another sees it in a portraiture of the principles and struggles of the voluntary controversy. Woodhouse and Mede, Bicheno and Croly, Faber and Elliot, Newton and Stewart, have constructed opposite systems with equal tenacity of purpose and ingenuity of conjecture. In the meantime, we can only add that the year-day theory requires defence; that the purpose of the Apocalypse needs to be more clearly defined, and that fortuitous similitude of events is not to mold our interpretation of prophetic symbols. We have only room to exhibit one of the simpler views of the Apocalypse:

Two cities are mentioned as overthrown, and a third is established on their ruins. By Sodom is meant Jerusalem, as is evident from the mention of the "Temple" and "Holy City." By Babylon is meant Rome. These two cities are overthrown, and the New Jerusalem is established. Jerusalem is the symbol of Judaism, and Babylon of Paganism, both of which systems are at length overthrown by the spread and power of Christianity. The whole prophesy may be arranged thus: 1. Introduction of the seven Epistles to the seven Churches. 2. Preparation for the great events to follow—seven seals. 3. Sodom, or Jerusalem, representing Judaism, destroyed by a series of calamities—seven trumpets. 4. Birth of Christianity, the child of uncorrupted Judaism, and preservation of the infant from destruction by the special interposition of heaven. 5. Babylon or Rome (in its first form as a marine monster), *i. e.* persecuting Paganism, destroyed by a series of calamities—seven vials. Under this

part there is a distinct allusion to Mohammedanism, a compound of Judaism and Paganism, which, under the Saracenic power, overthrew Christianity in the East, etc. 6. Babylon in another form—the Papal despotism, a componnd of Paganism and Christianity; Babylon finally and completely destroyed—conflicts and victories succeeding the Reformation. 7. The millennium—another hostile power still future, or post-millennial—the last judgment and final victory. 8. Final and complete triumph of Christianity, and the consummation of its glory in the heavenly world.

THE EVIDENCES

OF

CHRISTIANITY,

IN WHICH THE NEW TESTAMENT IS PROVED TO BE GENUINE, AND THE RELIGION OF OUR SAVIOUR TRULY DIVINE.

It is a well-attested truth, that immorality ever grows with infidelity, and to the prevalence of vice must certainly be imputed that scorn and derision in which too many in the present day hold the sacred oracles of God, the revealed will of the Great Creator of Heaven and Earth.

From hence, therefore, it is reasonable to ask, what cause can produce so strange a deviation from the ways of God? Doubtless from that unhappy disregard, either to the Gospel in general, or to his peculiar and essential truths so visible in the world, and which appear to be continually increasing. It is too evident that multitudes among us, like those of old, who thought and professed themselves the wisest of mankind, or, in other words, the *free-thinkers* of the age, have been desirous of banishing God and his truths from their knowledge; and it is therefore the less to be wondered at, if "God has given them up to a reprobate mind; to the most infamous lusts and enormities; and to a depth of degeneracy, which, while it is in part the natural consequence, is in part also the just, but dreadful punishment of their apostacy from the faith. And we are persuaded that those who wish well to the cause of Christ, as every true Christian most certainly does, cannot serve it more effectually, than by endeavoring to establish men in their belief of the Gospel in general, and to build them up in the most holy faith. The latter, we flatter ourselves, we have sufficiently done in the following lives of the blessed Jesus, and his Apostles and followers; and propose in this Dissertation, to prove that the Christian Religion is true, and owes its origin to God himself.

It will be needless to observe, that this is a matter of the highest importance, as every one will apprehend that this is the foundation of all our hopes. It is absolutely necessary in this age of libertinism, that every Christian should be able "to give a reason for the hope that is in him," and to put to silence the tongues of those men that have "evil will at Zion." And may the Almighty enable us to plead his cause with success! May the divine Spirit accompany these arguments, that the faith of our readers being more and more established, it may appear that the tree is watered at the roots, by all the other graces growing and flourishing in an equal proportion!

God has made ample provision for the honor and support of his Gospel, by furnishing it with a variety of proofs, which may, with undiminished, and indeed, with growing conviction, be displayed in the eyes of the whole world: and we should be greatly wanting in gratitude to him, in zeal for a Redeemer's kingdom, and in charitable concern for the conversion of those who reject the Gospel, as well as for the edification of those who embrace it, should we wholly overlook those arguments, or neglect to acquaint ourselves with them. This is the evidence we propose, and beg our readers would peruse it with becoming attention.

In prosecution of this great design, we shall endeavor more particularly to show, that if we take the matter on a general survey, it will appear highly probable, that such a system of doctrines and precepts, as we find Christianity to be, should indeed have been a "divine Revelation;" and then, that if we examine into the external evidence of it, we shall find it *certain in fact* that it was so, and that it had its origin from on high.

First, then, we are to show, that taking the matter merely in theory, it will appear highly probable, that such a system as the Gospel, should be indeed a divine revelation.

To prove this, we shall endeavor to shew, That the state of mankind was such as greatly to need a revelation; That there seems, from the light of nature, encouragement to hope that God would grant one; That it is reasonable to believe, that if any were made, it should be introduced and transmitted as Christianity was; and, That its general nature and substance should be such as we find that of the Gospel is. If we satisfactorily prove these particulars, there will be a strong *presumptive evidence* that the "Gospel is from God," and a fair way will be opened for that more *divine proof* which is principally intended.

1. The case of mankind is naturally such as to need a divine revelation.

We would not be understood to speak here of a man in his original state, though even then, some instruction from above seemed necessary to inform him of many particulars, which it was highly proper for him then to know; but we speak of him in the degenerate condition in which he now so evidently lies, by whatever means he fell into it. It is very easy to make florid encomiums on the perfection of natural light, and to deceive unwary readers by an ambiguous term, as a late author has done in his deistical writings; a fallacy beneath an ingenious reasoner, and which alone ought to have exposed his book to the contempt of every serious reader. Truth needs no disguise; a candid advocate scorns such subterfuges; let facts speak for themselves, and controversy will soon be decided. We appeal to every intelligent reader, who is acquainted with the records of antiquity, or that has any knowledge of the present state of those countries where Christianity is unknown, whether it is not too obvious a truth, that the whole heathen world has lain, and still lies in a state of wickedness. Have not the greater part of them been perpetually bewildered in their religious notions and practices, very different from each other, and almost equally differing on all sides from the appearances of truth and reason? Is any thing so wild as not to have been believed; any thing so infamous as not to have been practised by them, while they not only pretended to justify it by reason, but to have consecrated it as a part of their religion? To this very day, what are the discoveries of new nations in the American or African world; but, generally speaking, the opening of new scenes of enormity? Rapine, lust, cruelty, human sacrifices, and the most stupid idolatries, are, and always have been, the morality and religion of almost all the Pagan nations under heaven; and if they have discovered a dawn of reason, it has only sufficed to convince them of the want of an abler guide, to direct them in pursuit of real happiness.

But perhaps some of our readers have only heard those things by uncertain reports. If this be the case, look around you within the sphere of your own observation, and remark the temper and character of the generality of those who have been educated in a Christian. and even in a Protestant country. Observe their ignorance and forgetfulness of the Divine Being, their impieties, their debaucheries, their fraud, their oppression, their pride, their avarice, their ambition, their unnatural insensibility of the wants, sorrows, and interest of each other; and when you see how bad they generally are in the midst of so many advantages, judge by that of the probable state of those that want them. When the candid reader has well weighed these particulars, let him judge whether a *revelation* be an *unnecessary thing*.

2. There is, from the light of nature, considerable encouragement to hope, that God would favor his creatures with so desirable a thing as a revelation appears to be.

That a revelation is in itself a possible thing is evident beyond all shadow of doubt. Shall not He that "made man's mouth," who has given us this wonderful faculty of discovering our sentiments, and communicating our ideas to each other: shall not He be able to converse with his rational creatures, and, by sensible manifestations, or inward impressions, to convey the knowledge of things which lie beyond the discernment of their natural faculties, and yet may be highly conducive to their advantage? To own a God, and to deny him such a power would be a notorious contradiction. But it may appear much more dubious, whether he will please to confer such a favor on sinful creatures.

Now it must be acknowledged, that he would not certainly conclude he would never do it; considering, on the one hand, how justly they stood exposed to his final displeasure: and, on the other what provision he had made by the frame of the human mind, and of nature around us, for giving us such notices of himself, as would leave us inexcusable, if we either failed to know him, or to glorify him as God, as the apostle argues at large. (Rom. i. 20, &c.) Nevertheless, we should have something of this kind to hope, from considering God as the indulgent father of his creatures; from observing the tender care he takes of us, and the liberal supply which he grants for the support of the animal life; especially from the provision he has made for man, considered as a guilty and calamitous creature, by the medicinal and healing virtues he has given to the productions of nature, which man in a perfect state of rectitude and happiness, never would have needed.

This is a circumstance which seems strongly to intimate, that he would, some time or other, graciously provide an adequate remedy to heal the minds of the children of men; and that he would interpose to instruct them in his own nature, in the manner in which he is to be served, and in the final treatment which they may expect from him. And certainly such an apprehension seems very congruous to the sentiments of the generality of mankind, a sufficient proof that men naturally expect some such kind of interposition of the Almighty.

3. It is natural to conclude, that if a revelation were given, it would be introduced, and transmitted in such a manner as the Evangelists shew us Christianity was.

It is, for instance, highly probable that it should be taught either by some illustrious person, sent down from a superior world, or at least by a man of eminent wisdom and piety, who should himself have been not only a teacher, but an example

of righteousness. In order to this, it seems probable, that he should be led through a series of calamities and distress, since, otherwise, he could not have been a pattern of that resignation, which adorns adversity, and is peculiar to it. And it might also have been expected that, in the extremity of his distress, the Almighty, whose messenger he was, should, in some extraordinary manner, have interposed either to preserve or to recover him from death.

It is, moreover, exceedingly probable, that such a person, and perhaps also those who were at first employed as his messengers to the world, should be endowed with a power of working miracles, both to awaken men's attention, and to prove his divine mission, and the consequent truth of his doctrines, some of which might perhaps be capable of no other proof; or if they were, it is certain that no method of arguing is so short, so plain, and so forcible, and on the whole so well suited to conviction, and probably, to the reformation of mankind, as a course of evident, repeated, and uncontrolled miracles. And such a method of proof is especially adapted to the populace, who are incomparably the greater part of mankind, and for whose benefit we may assure ourselves a revelation would be chiefly designed. It might be added, that it was no way improbable, though not in itself certain, that a dispensation should open gradually to the world; and that the most illustrious messenger of God to men should be ushered in by some predictions which should raise a great expectation of his appearance, and have an evident accomplishment in him.

As to the propagation of a religion so introduced, it seems no way improbable, that having been thus established in its first age, it should be transmitted to future generations by credible testimony, as other important facts are. It is certain, that affairs of the utmost moment, transacted among men, depend on testimony; on this, voyages are undertaken, settlements made, and controversies decided; controversies on which not only the estates but the lives of men depend. Though it must be owned, that such an historical evidence is not equally convincing with miracles which are wrought before our own eyes; yet it is certain it may rise to such a degree as to exclude all reasonable doubt. We know not why we should expect, that the evidence of a revelation should be such as universally to compel the immediate acquiescence of all to whom it is offered. It appears much more probable, that it should be so adjusted as to be a kind of touchstone to the tempers and characters of men, capable, indeed, of giving ample satisfaction to the diligent and candid inquirer, yet attended with some circumstances, from whence the captious and perverse might take occasion to cavil and object. Such we might reasonably suppose a revelation would

be, and such we maintain Christianity is. The teachers of it undertake to prove that it was thus introduced, thus established, and thus transmitted; and we trust that this is a strong presumption in its favor, especially as we can add,

4. That the principal doctrines contained in the Gospel are of such a nature, that we might in general suppose a divine revelation would be—rational, practical, and sublime.

It is natural to imagine, that in a revelation of a religion from God, the great principles of natural religion should be clearly asserted, and strongly maintained: such as the existence, the unity, the perfection, and the providence of God; the essential and immutable difference between moral good and evil; the obligations we are under to the various branches of virtue, whether human, social, or divine; the value and immortality of the soul; and the rewards and punishments of a future state. All these particulars every rational person would conclude were contained in it; and that upon the whole it should appear calculated to form men's minds to a proper temper, rather than to amuse them with curious speculations.

It might, indeed, be farther supposed, that such a revelation would contain some things which could not have been learned from the highest improvements of natural light: such as, that God would pardon the sins of the most flagrant offender, on account of the satisfaction made by his dear Son, the Redeemer of the world; that he would work holy desires in the hearts of his people, by the power of his divine grace, and form them for happiness hereafter by implanting in them a principle of holiness.

In short, the Christian system is undoubtedly worthy of God, nor is it possible to imagine from whom else it could have proceeded.*

Thus have we considered the first branch of the argument, and shewn, we hope satisfactorily, that, taking the Christian system only in theory, it appears highly probable. The truth is, that to embrace the Gospel is so safe, and upon the whole so comfortable a thing, that a wise man would deliberately venture his all upon it, though nothing more could be offered for its confirmation. But, blessed be God, we have a great deal more to offer in this important cause; and can add, with still greater confidence, that it is not only probable in theory but,

Secondly, That it is in fact certain, that Christianity is, indeed, a divine revelation.

* From what has been said, it sufficiently appears, that a revelation was absolutely necessary to instruct mankind in the most important principles of religion; and consequently all the fallacious arguments of deistical writers, against the necessity of an extraordinary revelation, fall to the ground like a mighty structure when the foundation is destroyed.

On this it must be confessed the chief stress is to be laid, and therefore we shall insist more largely on this branch of the argument. and endeavor, by the divine assistance, to prove the certainty of this great, this important fact. And in order to this, it will be necessary to shew,

I. That the books in the New Testament, now extant, may be depended upon as written by the first preachers and publishers of Christianity. And,

II. That from hence it will certainly follow that what they assert is true, and that the religion they teach brings with it such evidences of a divine authority, as may justly recommend it to our acceptance.

Each of these heads would furnish matter for several volumes; but as we are writing only a Dissertation, it is our business to strike at the most obvious and important particulars, by which they may be briefly illustrated and confirmed.

We are to prove, that the books of the New Testament, now extant, were written by the first preachers and publishers of Christianity.

We shall now confine ourselves to the books of the New Testament, as that particular part of the sacred oracles has engrossed our present attention, though we propose, in another place, to lay down some solid arguments in defence of the authenticity of the Old, which is an invaluable treasure, being the very foundation of the New, and demands our daily pleasing and grateful perusal, and is capable of being defended in a manner we are persuaded its most subtle enemies will never be able to answer.

After premising these particulars; we shall go on to the argument, and advance it by the following degrees: We shall prove that Christianity is an ancient religion;—That there was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth crucified above seventeen hundred years ago at Jerusalem;—That the first preachers of his religion wrote books, which went by the name of those that now make up the volume of the New Testament;—And that the English translation of them, now publicly used, is in the main faithful, and may be depended upon.

I. It is certain that Christianity is not a new religion, but one that was maintained by great multitudes soon after the time in which the Gospels tell us Jesus appeared.

That there was, considerably more than seventeen hundred years ago, a body of men that went by the name of Christians, is fully as evident as that a race of men was then subsisting in the world; nor do we know that any enemy to the religion of Jesus has ever been vile and confident enough to dispute it. Indeed, there are such numbers, both of Christian and Heathen writers, who attest this fact, that it would be madness to deny

it, and therefore superfluous for us to prove it. But we cannot help observing, that Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny, Marcus Antoninus, and others, not only attest the existence of such a body of men, but also inform us of the extreme persecutions they underwent in the very infancy of their religion: a strong evidence that they were firmly persuaded that their religion was from on high.

2. That there was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified at Jerusalem, when Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor there.

It can never be imagined, that multitudes of people should take their names from Christ, and sacrifice their lives for their adherence to him, even in the same age in which he lived, if they had not been well assured that there was such a person. Nay, Tacitus himself tells us that he was put to death under Pontius Pilate, who was procurator of Judea in the reign of Tiberius. And it is well known that the primitive Christian apologists often appeal to the acts of Pilate, or the memoirs of his government, which he, according to the custom of all other procurators, transmitted to Rome, as containing an account of these transactions; and as the appeal was made to those who had the command of the public records, we may assure ourselves such testimonies were then extant. But it is a fact which our enemies never denied. They owned it; they even gloried in it, and upbraided the Christians with the infamous death of him whom they called their Saviour. Thus it sufficiently appears that there was, at the time, commonly supposed, such a person as our blessed Saviour Christ, who was a divine teacher, and who gathered many disciples, by whom his religion was afterwards published in the world.

3. It is also certain, that the first publishers of this religion wrote books, which contained an account of the life and doctrines of Jesus their Master, and which went by the names of those that now make up our New Testament.

It was in the nature of things highly probable, that they would declare and publish to the world, in writing, the things they had seen and heard, considering how common books were in the age and countries in which they taught; and of how great importance an acquaintance with the history and doctrine of Christ was to the purposes which they so strenuously pursued: but we have much more than such a presumptive evidence.

The most inveterate adversaries to Christianity must grant that we have books of great antiquity, written some fourteen, some fifteen, and some more than sixteen hundred years ago; in which mention is made of the life of Christ, as written by many, and especially by four of his disciples, who, by way

of eminence, are styled Evangelists. Great pains have indeed been taken to endeavor to prove that some spurious pieces were published under the names of the apostles, containing the history of these things. But all these have been confuted, and the vile assertors stigmatized with that contempt their false asseverations justly deserved. And we are sure he must be very little acquainted with the ancient ecclesiastical writers who does not know that the primitive Christians made a great difference between those writings, which we call the canonical books of the New Testament, and others; which plainly shews that they did not judge of writings merely by the names of their pretended authors, but inquired with an accuracy becoming the importance of these pretences. The result of this inquiry was, that the four Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles of St. Paul, one of St. Peter, and one of St. John, were received upon such evidence, that Eusebius, a most accurate and early critic in these things, could not learn that they had ever been disputed. And afterwards the remaining books of the New Testament, namely, Hebrews,—James,—the second of Peter,—the second and third of John,—Jude,—and the Revelations, were admitted as genuine, and added to the rest. On the whole it is sufficiently plain, that the primitive Christians were so thoroughly satisfied of the authority of the sacred books, that they speak of them, not only as credible and authentic, but as equal to the oracles of the Old Testament, as divinely inspired, as the words of the Spirit, as the law and organ of God, and as the rule of faith, which cannot be contradicted without the greatest guilt; with many other expressions of the same kind, which often occur in their discourses. To which we may add, that in some of their councils the New Testament was placed on a throne, to signify their desire that all their controversies might be determined, and their actions regulated by it.

From the whole, therefore it is plain, that the primitive church did receive certain pieces which bore the same titles with the books of our New Testament. Now we think it is evident, that they were as capable of judging whether a book was written by Matthew, John, or Paul, as the ancient Romans could be of determining whether Horace, Tully, or Livy, wrote those which go under their names. And certainly the interest of the former was much more concerned in the writings of the apostles, than that of the latter in the compositions of their poets, orators, or even their historians; and there is reason to believe they would take much greater care to inform themselves fully in the merits of the cause, and to avoid being imposed upon by artifice and fiction. Let us now proceed to shew,

4. That the books of the New Testament have been preserved in the main uncorrupted to the present time, in the original language in which they were written.

This is a matter of the last importance; and, blessed be God, we have a proportional evidence: an evidence in which the hand of Providence has indeed been remarkably seen; for it is certain there is no ancient book in the world, which may so certainly and so easily be proved to be authentic.

And here we will not argue merely from the piety of the primitive Christians, and the heroic actions and resolutions with which they chose to endure the greatest extremities, rather than deliver up their Bibles, though that consideration is evidently of the greatest weight; but shall entreat our readers to consider the utter improbability of altering them. From the first ages they were received and read in churches, as a part of their public worship, just as Moses and the prophets were in the Jewish synagogues: they were presently spread far and near, as the boundaries of the church were increased; they were early translated into other languages, of which translations some remain to this very day. Now, when this was the case how could they be adulterated? Is it a thing to be supposed and imagined, that thousands and millions of people should have come together from distant countries; and that with all the diversities of language and customs, and, it may be added, of sentiments, too, they should have agreed on corrupting a book, which they all acknowledged to be the rule of their faith and their manners, and the great charter by which they held their eternal hopes? It would be madness to believe it, especially when we consider what numbers of heretics appeared in the very infancy of the church, who all pretended to build their notions on Scripture, and most of them appealed to it as the final judge of controversies. Now it is certain, that these different sects of Christians were a perpetual guard upon each other, and rendered it impossible for one party to practice thus grossly on the sacred books, without the discovery and clamor of the rest.

Nor must we omit to observe, that in every age, from the apostles' time to our own, there have been numberless quotations made from the books of the New Testament; and a multitude of commentaries in various languages, and some of very ancient date, have been written upon them; so that if the books themselves were lost, they might, in a great measure, if not entirely, be recovered from the writings of others. And we may venture to say, that if all the quotations ever made from all the ancient writings now in Europe were gathered together, the bulk of them would by no means be comparable to that of the quotations taken from the New Testament alone. So that any

man might with much better reason dispute whether the writings ascribed to Homer, Demosthenes, Virgil, or Cæsar, be in the main such as they left them, than he could question it concerning those of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, and Paul.

It may be said in the main, because we readily allow, that the hand of a printer, or of a transcriber, might chance, in some places, to insert one letter or word for another; and the various readings of this, as well as all other ancient books, prove that this has sometimes been the case. But those various readings are generally of such little importance, that he who can urge them as an objection against the assertion we are now maintaining, must have little judgment, or little integrity; and, indeed, after those excellent things which have been said on the subject by many defenders of Christianity, he must, if he has read their writings, have little modesty too.

Since then it appears that the books in the New Testament, as they now stand in the original, are, without any material alteration, such as they were when they came from the hands of the sacred authors, nothing remains to complete this part of the argument, but to shew,

5. That the translation of them now in common use may be depended upon, as, in all particulars, agreeable to the original.

This is a fact of which the generality of readers are not able to judge immediately, though it is of the last importance; it is, therefore, with great pleasure we reflect, how ample evidence they may have another way, to make their minds easy on this head. We mean by the concurrent testimony of others, in circumstances in which it cannot be imagined they would unite to deceive them.

There are few who preach the Gospel of the Son of God, but have examined this matter with the greatest care, and are able to judge in so easy a case; and who will all unanimously declare, that the common English translation is in the main faithful and judicious. We do not, indeed, scruple, on some occasions, to animadvert upon it; but these remarks never affect the fundamentals of religion, and seldom reach any further than the beauty of a figure, or the connexion of an argument.

But the argument does not wholly rest on the unanimous suffrages of the teachers of the Gospel. The different sects of protestants in this kingdom bear witness to this truth. For it is certain, that where a body of men dissent from the public establishment, and yet agree with the church from which they dissent, in using the same translation, though they are capable of examining and judging of it, it is as great evidence as can be desired, that such a translation is right in the main. But the dissenters unanimously unite with us in bearing testimony to

the oracle of God, as delivered in our own language: and consequently our translation may be depended upon.

Thus have I finished the first part of my argument, and shewn that the Christian religion is certainly true, and that the New Testament is genuine. I shall next proceed to shew,

II. That from allowing the New Testament to be genuine, it will undeniably follow, that Christianity is a divine revelation.

And here a person is at first ready to be lost in the multiplicity of arguments which surround him. It is very easy to find proofs, but difficult to range and dispose them in such an order as best to illustrate and confirm each other. We shall therefore offer them in the following natural series.

The authors of the books contained in the New Testament were certainly capable of judging concerning the truth of the facts they asserted: their characters, so far as we can judge of them by their writings, render them worthy of regard; and they were under no temptation to attempt imposing on the world by such relations as they have given us, if they had been false. Nevertheless, it is certain in fact, they did gain credit, and succeeded in a most amazing manner, against all opposition. It is therefore certain, that the facts which they asserted were true; and if they were true, then it was reasonable for their contemporaries, and it is reasonable for us, to receive the Gospel as a divine revelation; especially if we consider what has happened to the world for the confirmation of it, since first propagated by them. This is the conclusion to which we must attend; and therefore let us seriously consider each of the steps by which we arrive at it.

It is exceedingly evident, that the writers of the New Testament certainly knew the facts they asserted were true.

And this they must have known, for this plain reason: because they inform us, they did not trust merely to the report even of persons whom they thought most credible, but were present themselves when several of the most important facts happened; and so received them on the testimony of their own senses. On this St. John, in his first epistle, ch. i. ver. 1—3, says a very great and reasonable stress: "That which we have seen with our eyes;" and that not only by a sudden glance but "which we have *attentively* looked upon, and *which even* our hands have handled, of the word of life:" i. e. of Christ and his Gospel, declare we unto you.

Let the common sense of mankind judge here. Did not Matthew and John certainly know whether they had personally, and familiarly, conversed with Jesus of Nazareth or not? Whether he had chosen them for his constant attendants and apostles? Whether they had seen him heal the sick, dispossess

devils, and raise the dead? And whether they themselves had received from him such miraculous endowments as they declare he bestowed upon them? Did they not know whether he fell into the hands of his enemies, and was publicly put to death or not? Did not John know whether he saw him expiring on the cross or not? and whether he received from him a dying charge, which he records, ch. xix. ver. 27? Did he not know whether he saw him wounded in the side with a spear or not? and whether he did, or did not see the effusion of blood and water, which was an infallible argument of his being really dead? Concerning which, it being so material a circumstance, he adds "He that saw it bare record; and he knoweth that he saith true;" i. e. that it was a case in which he could not possibly be deceived. And with regard to Christ's resurrection, did he not certainly know whether he saw our Lord again and again; and whether he handled his body, that he might be sure it was not a mere phantom? What one circumstance of his life could he certainly know if he were mistaken in this?

Did not Luke know whether he was in the ship with Paul when that extraordinary wreck happened, by which they were thrown ashore on the island of Malta? Did he not know whether, while they were lodged together in the governor's house, Paul miraculously healed one of the family, and many other diseased persons in the island, as he positively asserts that he did in *Acts* xxviii.?

Did not Paul certainly know whether Christ appeared to him on the way to Damascus or not? whether he was blind; and afterwards, on the prayer of a fellow-disciple, received his sight? or was that a circumstance in which there could be room for mistake? Did he not know whether he received such extraordinary revelations and extraordinary powers, as to be able, by the laying on of his hands, or by the words of his mouth, to work miracles?

To add no more: Did not Peter know whether he saw the glory of Christ's transfiguration, and heard that voice to which he so expressly refers, when he says, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. when there came such a voice to him; and this voice we heard?" 2 *Peter*, i. 16—18.

Now Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, and Peter, are by far the most considerable writers of the New Testament; and surely when we reflect on these particulars, we must own that there are few historians, ancient or modern, that could so certainly judge of the truth of the facts which they have related. The reason why we have enlarged in stating so clear a case is, that it is the foundation of the whole argument; and that this branch of it alone cuts off infidels from that refuge which they could

generally choose, that of pleading the apostles were enthusiasts, and leaves them silent, unless they will say that they were impostors. For you evidently see, that could we suppose these facts to be false, they could by no means pretend an involuntary mistake; but must, in the most criminal and aggravated sense, as St. Paul himself expresses it, 1 *Cor.* xv. 15, "Be found false witnesses of God." But how unreasonable it would be to charge them with so notorious a crime will in part appear if we consider,

That the character of these writers, so far as we can judge by their works, seems to render them worthy of regard; and leaves no room to imagine that they intended to deceive us.

It would be unnecessary to shew at large, that they appear to have been persons of natural sense, and at the time of their writing, of a composed mind; for certainly, no man that ever read the New Testament with attention, could imagine they were idiots or madmen. Let the discourses of Christ in the Evangelists, of Peter and Paul in the Acts, as well as many passages in the Epistles, be perused, and we will venture to say, that he who is not even charmed with them, must be a stranger to all the justest rules of polite criticism. But he who suspects that the writers wanted common sense, must himself be most evidently destitute of it; and he who can suspect they might possibly be distracted, must himself, in this instance at least be just as mad as he imagines them to have been. It was necessary, however, just to touch upon this; because, unless we are satisfied that a person be himself in what he writes, we cannot pretend to determine his character from his writings.

Having premised this, let us, on perusing the New Testament, observe what evident marks it bears of simplicity and integrity, of piety and benevolence; upon which we shall find them pleading the cause of its authors, with a nervous, though gentle eloquence; and powerfully persuading the mind, that men who were capable of writing so excellently well, must evidently appear to have strictly adhered to the rectitude of truth.

The manner in which they relate this narration is most happily adapted to gain our belief. For as they tell it with a great deal of circumstances, which by no means could be prudent in legendary writers, because it leaves so much the more room for confutation; so they also do it in the most easy and natural manner. There is no air of declamation and harangue: nothing that looks like artifice and design; no apologies, no encomiums, no character, no reflections, no digressions: but the facts are recounted with great simplicity, just as they appear to have happened; and those facts are left to speak for themselves in their great author. It is plain that the rest of these writers, as well as the apostle Paul, did not affect excel-

lency of speech, or flights of eloquence, as the phrase signifies, but determined to know nothing, though amongst the most learned and polite, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. A conduct which is the more to be admired, when we consider how extraordinary a theme theirs was, and with what abundant variety of most pathetic declamation, it would easily have furnished any common writer: so that one would really wonder how they could forbear it. But they rightly judged that a vain affectation of ornament, when recording such facts of their own knowledge, might perhaps have brought their sincerity into question; and so have rendered the cross of Christ of no effect.

Their integrity likewise evidently appears in the freedom with which they mention those circumstances, which might have exposed their Master and themselves to the greatest contempt among prejudiced and inconsiderate men; such as they knew they must generally expect to meet with. As to their Master, they scruple not to own, that his country was despised, his birth and education mean, and his life indigent; that he was most disdainfully rejected by the rulers, and accused of sabbath-breaking, blasphemy, and sedition: that he was reviled by the populace as a debauchee, a lunatic, and a demoniac; and at last, by the united rage of both rulers and people, was publicly executed as the vilest of malefactors, with all imaginable circumstances of ignominy, scorn, and abhorrence.

Nor do they scruple to own that terror and distress of spirit into which he was thrown by his sufferings, though this was a circumstance at which some of the heathens took the greatest offence, as utterly unworthy so excellent and divine a person. As to themselves, the apostles readily confess not only the meanness of their original employment, and the scandal of their former life, but their prejudices, their follies, and their faults, after Christ had honored them with so holy a calling. They acknowledged their lowness of apprehension under so excellent a teacher; their unbelief, their cowardice, their ambition, their rash zeal, and their foolish contentions. So that on the whole, they seemed every where to forget they were writing of themselves, and appear not at all solicitous about their own reputation; but only that they might represent the matter just as it was, whether they went through honor or dishonor, through evil report or good report. Nor is this all; for,

It is certain, that in their writings there are the most genuine traces, not only of a plain and honest, but of a most pious and devout, a most benevolent and generous disposition. These appear especially in the epistolary parts of the New Testament, where indeed we should most reasonably expect to find them: and of these it may be confidently affirmed, that the greater progress any one has made in love to God, in zeal for his glory, in a

compassionate and generous concern for the present and future happiness of mankind; the more humble, and candid, and temperate, and pure he is, the more ardently he loves truth, and the more steadily he is determined to suffer the greatest extremity in its defence; in a word, the more his heart is weaned from the present world, and the more it is fired with the prospects of a glorious immortality, the more pleasure he will take in reading those writings; the more will he relish the spirit which discovers itself in them, and find that as face answers to face in water, so do the traces of divine grace which appear there, answer to those which a good man feels in his own soul. Nay, it may be added that the warm and genuine workings of that excellent and holy temper, which every where discovers itself in the New Testament, have for many ages been the most effectual method of animating true believers with a zeal for the honor of the Gospel, and a desire of framing their conversation as becomes the Gospel of Christ.

Where then there are such genuine marks of an excellent character, not only in their discourses, but in their epistolary writings, and those sometimes addressed to particular and intimate friends, to whom the mind naturally opens itself with the greatest freedom, surely no candid and equitable judge would lightly believe them to be all counterfeit; or would imagine, without very substantial proof, that persons who breathe such exalted sentiments of God and religion, should be guilty of any kind of wickedness; and in proportion to the degree of enormity and aggravation attending such a supposed crime, it may justly be expected that the evidence of their having really committed it should be unanswerably strong and convincing.

Now it is very certain, on the principles laid down above, that if the testimony of the apostles was false, they must have acted as detestable and villainous a part as one can easily conceive. To be found, as the apostle with his usual energy expresses it, false witnesses of God in any single instance, and solemnly declare to have done miraculously what we in our own consciences know was never done at all, would be an audacious degree of impiety, to which none but the most abandoned of mankind could arrive. Yet if the testimony of the apostles was false, as we have proved they could not be themselves mistaken in it, this must have been their case; and that not in one single instance only, but in a thousand. Their lives must, in effect, be one continued and perpetual scene of perjury; and all the most solemn actions of it (in which they were speaking to God, or speaking of him as God the Father of Christ, from whom they received their commission and powers) must be a most profane and daring insult on all the acknowledged perfections of his nature.

And the inhumanity of such a conduct would on the whole, have been equal to its impiety. For it would have been deceiving men in their most important interests, and persuading them to venture their own future happiness on the power and fidelity of one whom, on this supposition, they knew to have been an impostor, and justly to have suffered a capital punishment for his crimes. It cannot be supposed that God, who regards the interest of his children, would long suffer such an imposition to prevail, without preventing it by the interposition of his wisdom and power.

It would have been great guilt to have given the hearts and devotions of men so wrong a turn, even though they had found magistrates ready to espouse and establish, yea, and to enforce the religion they taught. But on the contrary, to labor to propagate it in the midst of the most vigorous and severe opposition from them, must equally enhance the guilt and folly of the undertaking. For by this means they would have made themselves accessary to the ruin of thousands; and all the calamities which fell on such proselytes, or even on their remotest descendants, for the sake of Christianity, would be in a great measure chargeable on these first preachers of it. The blood of honest, yea, of pious, worthy, and heroic persons, who might otherwise have been the greatest blessings to the public, would in effect, be crying for vengeance against them. And the distresses of the widows and orphans, which those martyrs might leave behind them, would join to swell the account.

So that on the whole, the guilt of those malefactors, who are from time to time the victims of public justice, even for robbery, murder, or treason, is small when compared with that which we have now been stating. And corrupt as human nature is, it appears to be utterly improbable, that twelve men should be found, we will not say in one little nation, but even on the whole face of the earth, who could be capable of entering into so black a confederacy, on any terms whatsoever.

And now, in this view of the case, let us make a serious pause, and compare with it what we have just been saying of the character of the apostles of Jesus, so far as an indifferent person could conjecture it from their writings, and then say, whether we can in our hearts believe them to have been these abandoned wretches, at once the reproach and astonishment of mankind? Would they have sealed a known falsity with their blood, or bartered their lives for the confirmation of vague notions or uncertain conjectures? We cannot surely believe such things of any, and much less of them, unless it shall appear they were in some peculiar circumstances of strong temptation; and what those circumstances could be, it is difficult even for imagination to conceive.

But history is so far from suggesting any unthought-of fact, to help our imagination on this head, that it bears strongly the contrary way. I shall now proceed to shew,

That they were under no temptation to forge a story of this kind, or to publish it to the world, knowing it to be false.

They could reasonably expect no gain, no reputation by it. But on the contrary, supposing it an imposture, they must, with the most ordinary share of prudence, have foreseen infamy and ruin, as the certain consequences of attempting it. For the grand foundation of their doctrines was, that Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified at Jerusalem by the Jewish rulers, was the Son of God, and the Lord of all things. We appeal to men' consciences, whether this looks at all like the contrivances o. artful and designing men?

It was evidently charging upon the princes of their country the most criminal and aggravated murder; indeed, all things considered, the most enormous act of wickedness which the sun had ever seen. They might therefore depend upon it, that these rulers would immediately employ all their art and power to confute the testimony, and to destroy their persons. Accordingly, one of them was presently stoned; another quickly beheaded; and most of the rest scattered abroad into strange cities (as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles) where they were sure to be received with great prejudices, raised against them amongst the Jews, by reports from Jerusalem, and highly strengthened by their expectations of a temporal Messiah: expectations, which, as the apostles knew by their own experience, it was exceedingly difficult to root out of men's minds: expectations which would render the doctrine of Christ crucified an insuperable stumbling-block to the Jews.

Nor could they expect a much better reception among the Gentiles, with whom their business was to persuade them to renounce the gods of their ancestors, and to depend upon a person who had died the death of a malefactor; to persuade them to forego the pompous idolatries in which they had been educated, and all the sensual indulgences with which their religion (if it may be called a religion) was attended, to worship one invisible God through one Mediator, in a most plain and simple manner, and to receive a set of precepts, most directly calculated to control and restrain not only the enormities of men's actions, but the irregularities of their hearts.

A most difficult undertaking! And to engage them to this, they had no other arguments to bring, but such as were taken from the views of an eternal state of happiness or misery, of which they asserted their crucified Jesus to be supreme disposer, who should another day dispense his blessings or his vengeance, as the Gospel had been embraced or rejected. Now, could

it be imagined, that men would easily be persuaded, merely on the credit of their affirmation, or in compliance with their importunity, to believe things which to their prejudiced minds would appear so improbable, and to submit to impositions to their corrupt inclinations so insupportable? And if they could not persuade them to it, what could the apostles then expect What but to be insulted as fools or madmen by one sort of people; and by another to be persecuted with the most savage and outrageous cruelty, as blasphemers of their gods, as seducers of the people, and disturbers of the public peace? All which we know happened accordingly. Nay, they assure us, that their Lord had often warned them of it; and they themselves expected it; and thought it necessary to admonish their followers to expect it too. And it appears, that far from drawing back upon that account, as they would surely have done, if they had been governed by secular motives, they became so much the more zealous and arduous; and animated each other to resist, even at the price of their blood.

Now, as this is a great evidence of the integrity and piety of their characters, and thus illustrates the former head, so it serves to the purpose now immediately in view, that is, it proves how improbable it is that any person of common sense should engage in an imposture, from which, as many have justly observed, they could on their own principles have nothing to expect, but ruin in this world, and damnation in the next. When we therefore consider and compare their characters and circumstances, it appears utterly improbable, on various accounts, that they would have attempted in this article to impose upon the world. But suppose that in consequence of some unaccountable, as well as some undiscoverable frenzy, they had ventured on the attempt, it is easy to shew,

That, humanly speaking, they must quickly have perished in it; and their cause must have died with them, without ever gaining any credit in the world. Common sense must have suggested to them that the report of a circumstance most extraordinary in its nature, if not attested by the most convincing evidence, must have exposed their cause as base, absurd, and contemptible.

One may venture to say this in general, on the principles which we have before laid down. But it appears still more evident, when we consider the nature of the fact they asserted, in conjunction with the methods they took to engage men to believe it, methods, which, had the apostles been impostors, must have had the most direct tendency to ruin both their doctrine and themselves.

Let us a little more particularly reflect on the nature of that grand fact, namely, the death, resurrection, and exaltation of

Christ; which, as already observed, was the great foundation of the Christian system, as first represented by the apostles. The resurrection of a dead man, and his ascension unto, and abode in the upper world, was so strange a thing, that a thousand objections might immediately be raised against it: and some extraordinary proofs might justly be required as a balance to them. Now the rejectors of the Gospel, it might be supposed, would set themselves to invent some hypothesis, which should have some appearance of probability, to shew how such amazing circumstances should ever gain credit in the world, if they had not some very convincing proofs. But this, with all their endeavors, is totally impracticable; and consequently, the most convincing proof that can be given of the great truth of the whole.

When the Christian seriously considers the horrid but vain attempts these enemies to the Gospel make, to pervert that religion on which the redemption of the human race is founded, how natural is it for him to ask, Is it possible that even the most impious and obstinate atheist can read with attention, the various and astonishing circumstances that attended the divine Redeemer from his birth to his crucifixion, and yet disbelieve? Does not even the minutest circumstance and transaction fully evince the great truths of his mission? And shall the atheist continue even to doubt, merely because himself was not an eye-witness to the facts recorded by those who were?

The celebrated Dr. Watts has very justly pictured the character of the atheist in the following stanzas:

Fools in their hearts believe and say
That all religion's vain,
There is no God that reigns on high,
Or minds the affairs of men.

From thoughts so dreadful and profane,
Corrupt discourse proceeds;
And in their impious hands are found
Abominable deeds.

Their tongues are us'd to speak deceit,
Their slanders never cease:
How swift to mischief are their feet,
Nor know the paths of peace!

Such seeds of sin (that bitter root)
In all their hearts are found;
Nor can they bear diviner fruit,
Till grace refine the ground.

But let us pursue the argument a little further, and we shall easily discover what must destroy every observation made by the Infidel, and confirm his opponent in the incontrovertible and glorious cause of the Christian religion.

The manner in which the apostles undertook to prove the truth of their testimony to these facts; and it will evidently appear, that instead of confirming their system, it must have been sufficient utterly to have overthrown it, had it been itself the most probable imposture that the wit of man could ever have contrived. It is evident that they did not merely assert that they had seen miracles wrought by this Jesus, but that he had endowed themselves with a variety of miraculous powers. And these they undertook to display, not in such idle and useless tricks as slight-of-hand might perform; but in such solid and important works as appeared worthy of a divine interposition, and entirely superior to human power: restoring sight to the blind, soundness to lepers, activity to the lame; and, in some instances, life to the dead. Nor were these things undertaken in a corner, in a circle of friends or dependants; nor were they said to have been wrought on such as might be suspected of being confederate in the fraud; but they were done often in the public streets, in the sight of enemies, on the persons of such as were utter strangers to the apostles; but sometimes well known to neighbors and spectators, as having long labored under those calamities, which, to human skill, were utterly incurable. Would impostors have made such pretensions as these—or, if they had, must they not immediately have been exposed and ruined?

Nor is there any room at all to object, that perhaps the apostles might not undertake to do these things on the spot, but only assert that they had done them elsewhere; for even then it would have been impossible that they should have gained credit; and they would have seemed less credible, on account of such a pretence. Whatever appearance there might have been of gravity, integrity, and piety, in the conversation of Peter, for instance, very few, especially such as had known but little of him, would have taken it upon his word, that he saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead at Bethany: but fewer yet would have believed his affirmation, had it been ever so solemn, that he himself raised Dorcas at Joppa, unless he had done some extraordinary work before them, correspondent at least, if not equal to that. One may easily think of invincible objections, which otherwise might have been made; and undoubtedly the more such assertions had been multiplied, every new person, scene, and fact, had been an additional advantage given to the enemy, to have detected and confuted the whole system, which Peter and his brethren had thus endeavored to establish.

But to come still closer to the point: If the New Testament be genuine, as we have already proved it, then it is certain that the apostles wrought miracles in the very presence of those to whom their writings were addressed; nay more, they like-

wise conferred those miraculous gifts in some considerable degree on others, even the very persons to whom they wrote, and they appeal to their consciences with regard to the truth of it. And could there possibly be room for delusion here? It is exceedingly remarkable to this purpose, that Paul makes this appeal to the Corinthians, and to the Galatians, when amongst them there were some persons disaffected to him, who were taking all opportunities to sink his character, and to destroy his influence. And could they have wished for a better opportunity than such an appeal? An appeal which, had not the fact it supposed been certain, far from recovering those that were wavering in their esteem, must have been sufficient utterly to disgust his most cordial and steady friends. The same remark may be applied to the advices and reproofs which the apostle there gives, relating to the use and abuse of their spiritual gifts: which had been notoriously absurd, and even ridiculous, had not the Christians to whom he wrote been really possessed of them. And these gifts were so plainly supernatural, that, as it had been observed, if it be allowed that miracles can prove a divine revelation, and that the First Epistle to the Corinthians be genuine, (of which, by the way, there is at least as pregnant evidences as that any part of the New Testament is so) then it follows, by a sure and easy consequence, that Christianity is true. Nevertheless, other arguments are not to be forgotten in these observations. And therefore, as we have proved, that had the testimony of the apostles been false, it is not to be imagined they could have gained credit at all; especially when they had put the proof of their cause on such a footing as we are sure they did. We shall now proceed to shew,

That it is a certain fact, the apostles did gain early credit, and succeeded in a most wonderful manner; from whence it will follow, that their testimonies were true.

That the apostles did, indeed gain credit in the world, is evident from what we before offered, in order to prove the early prevalence of Christianity in it, and this may be farther confirmed from many passages in the New Testament. And here we insist not so much on express historical testimonies though some of them are very remarkable; especially that of the brethren at Jerusalem, who speak of vast numbers of believing Jews assembled at the feast of Pentecost, mentioned in chap. ii. of the Acts. But I argue from the Epistles written o several churches, which plainly prove, that there were congregations of Christians in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Colosse, Thessalonica, Philippa, Laodicea, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Crete, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bythinia, and many other places; insomuch that one of the

apostles could say, "That Christ had so wrought by him to make the gentiles obedient *not only* in word *or profession*, *but* in deed *too*; that from Jerusalem, even round about into Illyrium, he had fully preached the Gospel of Christ:" or, as the word imports, "had accomplished" the purposes of it. And there is a great deal of reason, both from the nature of the thing, and from the testimony of ancient history, to believe that others of the apostles had considerable success elsewhere. So that St. Paul might with reason apply to them and their doctrine, what is originally spoken of the luminaries of heaven, and the instruction they communicate, "their sound has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."

So great was the number of those who were made proselytes to Christianity by the preaching of the apostles. And we have all imaginable reason to believe, that there were none of all those proselytes, but what were fully persuaded of the truth of the testimony they bore; for otherwise, no imaginable reason can be given for their entering themselves into such a profession. The apostles had no secular terror to affright their proselytes; no secular rewards to bribe them, no dazzling eloquence to enchant them; on the contrary, all these were in a powerful manner pleading against the apostles; yet their testimony was received; and their new converts were so thoroughly satisfied with the evidence they gave them of their mission, that they encountered great persecutions, and cheerfully ventured estate, liberty, and life itself, on the truth of the facts they asserted, as plainly appears from the many passages in the Epistles, which none can think the apostles would ever have written, if those first Christians had not been in a persecuted condition.

Nor will it signify any thing to object, that most of these converts were persons of a low rank and ordinary education, who therefore might be more easily imposed upon than others. For not to mention Sergius Paulus, Dionysius the Areopagite, or the domestics of Cæsar's household, (with others of superior station in life) it is sufficient to call to mind, that the apostles did not put their cause on the issue of labored arguments, in which the populace might quickly have been entangled and lost, but on such plain facts as they might judge of as easily and surely as any others; indeed, on what they themselves saw, and, in part too, on what they felt.

Now this might be sufficient to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion. It has been shewn, that there is no reason to believe, that the apostles, who certainly knew the truth, would have attempted a fraud of this kind—so, if they had attempted it, they could not possibly have succeeded; nevertheless, they did succeed in a very remarkable manner. Whence it plainly follows, that what they testified was true.

Admitting the facts which they testified concerning Christ to be true, then it was reasonable for their cotemporaries, and is reasonable for us, to receive the Gospel, which they have transmitted to us as a divine revelation.

The great things they asserted were, that Jesus was the Christ; and that he was proved to be so, by prophesies accomplished in him, and by miracles wrought by him, and by others in his name. Let us attend to each of these, and we shall find them no contemptible arguments; but must be forced to acknowledge, that these premises being established, the conclusion most easily and necessarily follows. And this conclusion, "that Jesus is the Christ," taken in all its extent, is an abstract of the Gospel revelation; and therefore is sometimes put for the whole of it.

The apostles, especially when disputing with the Jews, frequently argued from the prophesies of the Old Testament, in which they say many things were expressly foretold, which were most literally and exactly fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Now, greatly to the evidence, confirmation and advantage of Christianity, so it is, that these prophecies are to this day extant in the original language; and this in the hands of a people most implacably averse to the Gospel. So that an attentive reader may still, in a great measure, satisfy himself as to the validity of the arguments drawn from them.

On searching these ancient and important records, we find not only in general, that it appeared the wisdom of God to raise up for his people an illustrious deliverer, who, among other glorious titles, is sometimes called the Messiah, or the Anointed One: but we are more particularly told, that this great event should happen before the government ceased in the tribe of Judah, while the second temple was standing; and a little before its destruction, about four hundred and ninety years after a command was given to rebuild Jerusalem; which was probably issued out in the seventh year of Artexerxes Longimanus, or at least within a few years before or after it. It is predicted that he should be of the seed of Abraham, born of a virgin, of the house of David, in the town of Bethlehem; that he should be anointed with an extraordinary effusion of the Divine Spirit; in virtue of which he should not only be a perfect and illustrious example of universal holiness and goodness, but should also perform many extraordinary and beneficial miracles Nevertheless, that for want of external pomp and splendor, he should be rejected and insulted by the Jews, and afterwards be cut off and slain by them. It is added, that he should rise from the dead before his body should be corrupted in the grave: and should be received up to heaven, and there seated at the right hand of God: from whence he should, in a won-

derful manner, pour out his spirit on his followers, in consequence of which, though the body of the Jewish people perished in their obstinate opposition to him, yet the Gentiles should be brought to the knowledge of the true God, and a kingdom established amongst them, which from small beginnings should spread itself to the end of the earth, and continue to the remotest ages.

Besides these most material circumstances, there were several others relating to him, which were either expressly foretold, or at least hinted at; all which, with those already mentioned, had so evident an accomplishment in Jesus, that we have no reason to wonder that they should receive the word with all readiness who searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so predicted there, as the apostles affirmed. For we are persuaded that no wise and religious person could imagine, that God would permit an impostor to arise, in whom so great a variety of predictions, delivered by so many different persons, and in so many distant ages, should have an exact accomplishment.

When the apostles were preaching to heathens, it is indeed true, that they might wave the argument from prophecy, because they were not capable judges of it. But when they insist on another, which might as soon captivate their belief, and as justly vindicate it; we mean, "the miracles performed by Christ, and those commissioned and influenced by him;" many of these were of such a nature as not to admit of any artifice or deceit, especially that most signal one of his resurrection from the dead, which may be called a miracle performed by, as well as upon, Christ; because he so expressly declares, that he had himself a power to resume his life at pleasure. The apostles well knew that this was a fact of such a nature that those who believed this, would never doubt of the rest. They often therefore single this out, and lay the whole stress of their cause upon it. This they proved to be true by their own testimony miraculously confirmed: and in proving this, they established Christianity on an impregnable rock. For we may safely refer it to any judge, whether it is an imaginable thing that God should raise the dead body of an impostor, especially, when he had solemnly appealed to such a resurrection, as a grand proof of his mission, and had expressly fixed the very day on which it was to happen.

From these undeniable observations it is evident that those who, on the apostles' testimony, believed that the prophecies of the Old Testament were accomplished in Jesus, and that God bore witness to him by miracles, and raised him from the dead, had abundant reason to believe, that the doctrine which Christ taught was divine, and his Gospel a revelation from heaven,

And if they had reason to admit this conclusion, then it is plain that we, who have such satisfactory evidences, on the one hand, that the testimony of the apostles was credible, and on the other, that this was the substance of it, have reason also to admit this grand inference from it, and embrace the Gospel as a faithful saying, and well worthy of acceptation. This is the thing we have attempted to prove; and here we should finish the argument, were it not for the confirmation it may receive from some additional considerations, which could not properly be introduced under any of the preceding heads.

We therefore add, in the last place, That the truth of the Gospel has received farther and very considerable confirmation from what has happened in the world since it was first published.

And here we must desire the reader to consider, on the one hand, what has been done to establish it, and, on the other, the methods which its enemies have been taking to destroy it.

1. Consider, what God has been doing to confirm the Gospel since its first publication. And we will venture to assert, that it will prove a farther evidence of its divine original.

We might here argue at large from its surprising propagation in the world;—from the miraculous powers with which not only the apostles, but succeeding preachers of the Gospel, and other converts, were endowed;—from the accomplishment of the prophecies recorded in the old Testament;—and from the preservation of the Jews, as a distinct people, notwithstanding the various difficulties and persecutions through which they have passed.

It might be particularly urged, in confirmation of the truth of Christianity, the wonderful success with which it has been attended, and the surprising propagation of the Gospel in the world.

We have endeavored, under a former head, to shew, that the Gospel met with so favorable a reception in the world, as evidently proved, that its first publishers were capable of producing sufficient evidence of its truth; evidence absolutely incompatible with imposture But we shall now carry this remark farther, and assert, that considering the circumstances of the case, it is amazing, that even truth itself, under so many disadvantages, should have so illustrious a triumph; and that its wonderful success so evidently proves such an extraordinary interposition of the Almighty in its favor, as may justly be called a miraculous attestation of it.

There was not only "one of a family, *or* two of a city, taken and brought to Zion; *but* the Lord so hastened it, in its appointed time, *that* a little one became a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." And as the apostles themselves were

honored with very remarkable success, so this divine seed was propagated so fast in the next age, that Pliny testifies, "He found the heathen temples in Achaia almost deserted:" and Tertullian afterwards boasts, "That all places, except those temples, were filled with Christians; so that were they only to withdraw, cities and provinces would be depopulated." Nor did the Gospel only triumph thus within the boundaries of the Roman empire; for long before Tertullian was born, Justin Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, which seems to have been written not much above an hundred years after Christ's death, declares, "That there was no nation of men, whether Greeks or Barbarians, not excepting those savages that wandered in clans from one region to another, and had no fixed habitation, who had not learned to offer prayers and thanksgivings to the Father and Maker of all, in the name of Jesus, who was crucified."

Now how is it possible to account for such circumstances as these, but by saying the hand of the Lord was with the first preachers of the Gospel, and therefore such multitudes believed, and turned to the Lord? How was it possible for so small a fountain to have swelled immediately into a mighty river, and even have so extensively spread itself on the face of the earth, if it had not sprung from the sanctuary of God, and been rendered triumphant by his Almighty arm?

Had this new religion, so directly contrary to all the prejudices of education, been formed to soothe men's vices, to countenance their errors, to defend their superstitions, or to promote their secular interests, we might easily have accounted for its prevalence in the world. Had its preachers been profound philosophers, or polite and fashionable orators, many might have been charmed, at least for a while, to follow them: or had the princes and potentates of the earth declared themselves its patrons, and armed their legions for its defence and propagation, multitudes might have been terrified into the profession, though not a soul could by such means have been rationally persuaded to the use of it. But without some such advantages as these, we can hardly conceive, how any new religion should so strangely prevail; even though it had crept into the world in its darkest ages, and the most barbarous countries; and though it had been gradually proposed in the most artful manner, with the finest veil industriously drawn over every part which might at first have given disgust to the beholder.

But every one knows that the very reverse of all this was the cause of Christianity. It is abundantly evident, from the apparent constitution of the religion of Jesus, that the lusts and errors, the superstitions and interests of carnal men, would immediately rise up against it as a most irreconcilable enemy.

It is known that the learning and wit of the Greeks and Romans were early employed to ridicule and obstruct its progress. It is known, that as all the herd of heathen deities were to be discarded, the priests, who subsisted by the superstitious worship paid them, must in interest find themselves obliged to oppose it. It is known, that the princes of the earth drew the sword against it, and armed torments and death for the destruction of its followers. And yet it triumphed over all though published in ages and places celebrated for learning and elegance; and proposed, not in an ornamental and artificial manner, but with the utmost plainness; the doctrines of the cross being always advanced as its grand foundation, though so notorious a stumbling-block both to the Jews and Gentiles; and the absolute necessity, not only of embracing Christianity but also of renouncing all idol worship, being insisted on immediately and in the strongest terms, and which must have made the religion of the Gospel appear to them the most singular that had ever been taught in the world.

Had one of the wits or politicians of the present age, seen the apostles, and a few other plain men, who had been educated among the lowest of the people, as most of the first teachers of Christianity were, going out armed with nothing but faith, truth, and goodness, to encounter the power of princes, the bigotry of priests, the learning of philosophers, the rage of the populace, and the prejudices of all; how would we have derided the attempt, and said with Sanballat, "What will these feeble Jews do?" But had he seen the event, surely he must have owned with the Egyptian Magi, in a far less illustrious miracle, that it was the finger of God; and might justly have fallen on his face, even among those whom he had insulted, with an humble acknowledgment "that God was with them of a truth."

We must not forget to mention the accomplishment of several prophecies, recorded in the New Testament, as a further confirmation given by God to the Gospel.

The most eminent and signal instance under this head, is that of our Lord's prediction concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, as recorded by St. Matthew, in his twenty-fourth chapter. The tragical history of it is most circumstantially described by Josephus, the historian, who was an eye witness of it; and the description which he has given of this sad calamity so exactly corresponds with the prophecy, that one would have thought, had we not known the contrary, that it had been written by a Christian, on purpose to illustrate it. And one can never enough admire that series of amazing providence, by which the author was preserved from most imminent danger,

that he might leave us that invaluable treasure which his writings contain.

We have no need of further evidence than we find in Josephus, of the exact accomplishment of what was prophesied concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. But our Lord had also foretold the long-continued desolation of the temple. And we cannot forbear mentioning the awful sanction which was given to that part of the prediction. For it is well known, that a heathen historian has assured us, that when Julian the apostate, in deliberate contempt of that prediction, solemnly and resolutely undertook to rebuild it; his impious design was frustrated miraculously, again and again; the workmen being consumed by globes of fire, which broke out from the foundations.

The prediction of St. Paul concerning the man of sin, and the apostacy of the latter times, is also well worthy of our remark; and though a great part of the book of Revelations be still concealed under a dark veil, yet the division of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms, the usurpation, persecution, and idolatry of the Romish church, and the long duration of the papal power with several other extraordinary events, which no human prudence could have foreseen, and which have happened long since the publication of that book, are so clearly foretold there, that we cannot but look on that part of the Scripture as an invaluable treasure: and it is not at all improbable, that the more visible accomplishment of some of its other prophecies, may be a great means of reviving the Christian cause, which is at present so much on the decline.

The preservation of the Jews, as a distinct people, is another particular, under this head, which well deserves our attentive regard.

'Tis plain that they are very numerous, notwithstanding all the slaughter and destruction of this people in former and latter ages. They are dispersed among various and most distant nations, and particularly in those parts of the world where Christianity is professed; and though they are exposed to great hatred and contempt on account of their different faith, and in most places subject to civil incapacities, if not to unchristian severities: yet they are still most obstinately tenacious of their religion: which is the more wonderful, as their fathers were so prone to apostatize from it; and as most of them seem to be utter strangers entirely to piety or humanity, and pour the greatest contempt on the moral precepts of their own law, while they are so attached to the ceremonial institutions of it, troublesome and inconvenient as they are. Now let us seriously reflect, what an evident hand of providence is here;—that by their dispersion, preservation, and adherence to their religion, it should come to pass,

that Christians should daily see the accomplishment of many remarkable prophecies concerning this people: and that we should always have amongst us such a crowd of unexceptionable witnesses to the truth of those ancient Hebrew records, on which so much of the evidence of the Gospel depends: records which are many of them so full to the purpose for which we allege them, that, as a celebrated writer very well observes, "Had it been represented that the whole body of the Jewish nation had been converted to Christianity, men would certainly have thought the assertion had been forged by Christians; and have looked upon them in the same light with the prophecies of the Sybils, as made many years after the events which they pretended to foretell."

And to add no more here, the preservation of the Jews as a distinct people, evidently leaves room for the accomplishment of those Old and New Testament prophecies, which relate to their national conversion and restoration: whereas that would be impossible in itself, or at least impossible to be known, if they were promiscuously blended with other people. On the whole, it is such a scene in the conduct of Providence, as we are well assured, cannot be paralleled in the history of any other nation upon earth: and affords a most obvious and important argument in favor of the Gospel.

Thus has Christianity been further confirmed since its publication, by what God has done to establish it. It only remains that we consider,

2. What confirmation it receives from the methods which its enemies have taken to destroy it.

And these have generally been, either persecution, or falsehood, or cavilling at some particulars in the revelation, without entering into the grand argument on which it is built, and fairly debating what is offered in its defence. Now who would not think the better of a cause for being thus attacked?

At first it is known, that the professors, and especially the preachers of the Gospel, were severely persecuted. In every city, bonds and imprisonments awaited them. As soon as ever the apostles began to preach Jesus and his resurrection, the Jewish rulers laid hold on them; and having confined and scourged them, strictly prohibited their speaking any more in his name. A little while after Stephen was murdered; and afterwards James and some other of the apostles. Now certainly such a conduct evidently betrayed a consciousness that they were not able to answer the apostles, and to support their own cause by the fair methods of reason and argument, to which, so far as the history affords us, they made no pretence, but attempted to bear them down by dint of authority, and to silence them by brutal force.

It would be needless to attempt shewing particularly how these unrighteous methods were pursued in succeeding ages and distant countries. The savage cruelties of Nero to these innocent and holy men were such as raised the pity even of their enemies. Yet this was one of the least extensive and destructive of the ten general persecutions, which arose in the Roman empire, besides several others in the neighboring countries, of which ecclesiastical history informs us.

These early enemies of the Gospel added falsehood and slander to their inhumanities. They endeavored to murder the reputations of Christians, as well as their persons; and were not ashamed to represent them as haters of the whole human species, for no imaginable reason but that they would not associate themselves in their idolatrous worship. Nay, they charged them with human sacrifices, incest, idolatry, and all the crimes for which themselves and their false gods were indeed justly detestable: but from which the Christians knew how to vindicate themselves, highly to their own honor, and the everlasting reproach of these malignant and pestilent accusers. And they have not failed to do it in many noble apologies, which through the divine Providence are transmitted to us, and are incomparably the most valuable of any ancient uninspired writings.

Such were the infamous, the scandalous methods, by which the Gospel was opposed in the earliest ages of the church; and it must be added, that the measures more lately taken to subvert it, especially among ourselves, seem rather to reflect a glory on it. The unhappy enemies of the Gospel of the Son of God have been told again and again, that we put the proof of it on plain facts. They themselves do not and cannot deny, that it prevailed early in the world, as we have shewn at large. There must have been some man or body of men who first introduced it; and even themselves, notwithstanding all their obstinacy and perverseness, generally confess that Christ and his apostles were the persons; which is a manifest acknowledgment of the most forcible argument they can give against their own debased principles.

Now which of these schemes will the unbelievers take? It seems that the deists of the present age fix on neither, as being secretly conscious they cannot support either; but they content themselves with cavilling at some circumstances attending the revelation, without daring to encounter its grand evidence; that is, they have been laboriously attempting to prove it to be improbable, or absurd, to suppose that to have been, which nevertheless plainly appears to have been facts. One of them most weakly and sophistically attempts to prove, in defiance of the common sense of mankind, that *the light of na-*

ture is a perfect rule, and therefore, that all revelation is needless, and indeed impossible. Another disguises the miracles of Christ by false representations of them, and then treats them as idle tales. A third takes a great deal of fruitless pains to shew, that some prophecies referred to in the New Testament are capable of another sense, different from that in which the apostles have taken them.

These things have been set in a very artful and fallacious light by persons, whose names will perhaps be transmitted to posterity with the infamous stigma of having been leaders in the cause of infidelity: but not a man of them undertakes to ascertain the grand fact. Nay, they generally take no more notice of the positive evidences by which it is even demonstrated, than if they had never heard it proposed; though they cavil at incidental passages in those books in which it is most clearly stated. And as for what they have urged, though perhaps some who were before weary of Christianity, may have taken occasion to reject it, and others for want of consulting the answers to them, may have been unwarily ensnared; yet the examination of these points has been greatly for the honor and vindication of the truth, which seems on this occasion to have been set in a clearer and stronger light than ever, at least in these latter ages.

The cause of Christianity has greatly gained by debate, and the Gospel comes like fine gold out of the furnace, which the more it is tried, the more it is approved. It must be owned, that the defenders of the Gospel have appeared with very different degrees of ability for the work; nor could it be otherwise among such numbers of them: but, on the whole, though the patrons of infidelity have been masters of wit, humor, and address, as well as of a moderate share of learning, and generally much more than a moderate share of assurance; yet so great is the force of truth, that (unless we may expect those writers who have unhappily called for the aid of the civil magistrate in the controversy) we cannot recollect to have seen any defence of the Gospel, which has not, on the whole, been sufficient to establish it, notwithstanding all the sophistical arguments of its subtle antagonists.

This is an observation that is continually gaining new strength, as new assaults are made upon the Gospel; and we cannot forbear saying, that as if it were by a kind of judicial infatuation, some who have distinguished themselves in the wretched cause of infidelity, have been permitted to fall into such gross misrepresentations, such senseless inconsistencies, such palpable falsehoods, and in a word, into such various and malignant *superfluity of naughtiness*, that to a wise and pious mind, they must appear like those venomous creatures,

which are said to carry an antidote in their own objections, particularly a noble Lord, who has given up several of the deistical objections, and even acknowledged the divine origina of the Gospel; for he asserts, "That no religion ever appeared in the world, whose natural tendency was so much directed to promote the peace and happiness of mankind." He declares, that "No system can be more simple and plain than that of a natural religion as it stands in the Gospel." He avers, that "he will not say, that the belief that Jesus was the Messiah, is the only article of belief necessary to make men Christians. There are other things doubtless contained in the revelation he made of himself, dependent on, and relative to this article, without the belief of which I suppose our charity would be very defective. But this I say, that the system of religion which Christ published, and his evangelists recorded, is a complete system to all the purposes of religion, natural and revealed. It contains all the duties of the former, it enforces the whole law of faith, by promising rewards, and threatening punishments, which he declares he will distribute when he comes to judge the world." The same writer alloweth that the Gospel is in all cases one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, of benevolence, and of universal charity. He professeth a great concern for true charity, in opposition to theology, and says, that "genuine Christianity was taught of God." And not to multiply passages to this purpose, he pronounces, that "the Christian system of faith and practice was revealed of God himself, and it is absurd and impious to assert, that the divine Being revealed it incompletely and imperfectly. Its simplicity and plainness shew, that it was designed to be the religion of mankind, and also manifest the divinity of its original." After reading these quotations and a great variety of others which might be produced from his Lordship's writings, the reader may easily judge what religion has to fear from this noble writer's arguments, and we will venture to assert, that he has himself entirely confuted his own objections.

Thus have we given the reader a brief view of the chief arguments in proof of Christianity, and the sum of the whole is this:

The Gospel is probable in theory, as considering the nature of God, and the circumstances of mankind, there was reason to hope a revelation might be given; and if any were given, we should naturally apprehend its internal evidence would be such as that of the Gospel is, and its external such as it is said to be. But it is also true in fact; for Christianity was early professed, as it was first introduced by Jesus of Nazareth, whose life and doctrines were published by his immediate at-

tendants, whose books are still preserved in the original language, and, in the main, are faithfully translated into our own, so that the books of the New Testament now in use, may be depended upon as written by the persons whose names they bear; and admitting this, the truth of the Gospel follows by a train of very easy consequences: for the authors certainly knew the truth of the facts they related; and considering what appears in the character and circumstances, we can never believe they would have attempted to deceive us; for if they had, they could not have gained credit in the world: but they did gain it in a very remarkable manner; therefore, the facts they attested were true, and the truth of the Gospel evidently follows from the certainty of those facts, and is completely confirmed by what has happened in the world since the publication of it.

This is the sum of what we flatter ourselves we have sufficiently proved; and shall now conclude what we have to say on this subject, with a few words by way of reflection.

1. Let us gratefully acknowledge the divine goodness, in favoring us with so excellent a revelation, and confirming it to us by such ample evidence.

We should daily adore the God of nature, for lighting up the sun, that glorious, though imperfect image of his own unapproachable lustre; and appointed it to gild the earth with the various rays, to cheer us with its benign influences, and to guide and direct us in our journeys and labors. But how incomparably more valuable is that "day-spring from on high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace?" Oh ye Christians, whose eyes are so happy to see, and your ears to hear, what reason have you for daily and hourly praise! When your minds are delighted with contemplating the riches of Gospel grace, when you view with wonder and joy, the harmonious system of your redemption; when you feel the burden of your guilt removed, the freedom of your address to the throne of Grace encouraged, and see the prospect of a fair inheritance to eternal glory opening upon you; then, in the pleasing transports of your souls, borrow the joyful anthem of the psalmist, and say, with the humblest gratitude and self-resignation, "God is the Lord who sheweth us light; bind the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar." Adore "God who first commanded the light to shine out of darkness," that by the discoveries of his word, and the operations of his Spirit, he hath "shined in your hearts to give you the knowledge of his glory, as reflected from the face of his Son." Let us all adore him, that this revelation hath reached us, who live in an age and country so distant from that in which it first appeared; while there are to this

very day, not only dark corners, but regions of the earth, that "are full of the habitations of idolatry and cruelty."

Let us peculiarly address ourselves to those whose education and circumstances of life have given them opportunities of a fuller inquiry into the state of those ancient or modern nations, that have been left merely to the light of unassisted reason; even to those who are acquainted with the history of their gods, the rites of their priests, the tales and even the hymns of their poets; nay, we will add, the reasoning of the sagest philosophers; all the precious and all the erroneous things they have said where religion and immortality are concerned. It may be imagined, that God gave to some of the most celebrated pagan writers that uncommon share of genius and eloquence, that they might, as it were, by their art, embalm the monsters of antiquity; that so succeeding ages might see in a more affecting view than we could otherwise have done, how weak the human mind is in its best estate, and the need which the greatest as well as the meanest of mankind have of being taught by a revelation from above. While we are daily conversing with such monuments as these, and are also surveying the evidences of Christianity, in a large and more distinct view than it was possible for us here to suppose them, we are under peculiar obligations to be very thankful for the Gospel ourselves, as well as to compassionate the cause of those to whom it has never been offered, or by whom it is slighted. And this leads us to another reflection.

2. What reason have we to pity those who reject this glorious Gospel, even when they have opportunities of inquiring into its clearest evidences?

Such undoubtedly we have in our own age and nation: and surely we should sometimes bestow a compassionate thought upon them, and lift up humble prayers for them, that God, peradventure, may give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are now led captive by him at his pleasure, we should pity heathens and Mahometans under their darkness and errors; but how much more deplorable is the case of these, who though they dwell in Emanuel's land, and in the valley of Zion, turn it into the valley of the shadow of death, by closing their eyes against so bright a lustre, and stopping their ears against the voice of the charmer? They are, indeed, in their own conceit, the only wise people, but their wisdom will die with them: so that to be sure, they will scorn our pity. But who can forbear it? Is there a more melancholy thought than this, that the Son of God should have done so much to introduce and establish the Gospel, and his Spirit so much to perpetuate and increase its evidence; and that after all it should be

contemptuously despised, even by creatures who are perishing without it? This is not only done, though we believe most frequently, by men of profligate and abandoned lives; but sometimes by persons who have the appearance of external morality, decency, and humanity, (for such are to be found among them) as well as men of wit and genius, of politeness and learning, of human prudence and experience in worldly affairs. It may also be added, that it is the case of some who were the children of pious parents, who were trained up in religious exercises, who once discovered serious impressions, and gave very encouraging hopes. Alas, whither are they fallen! How shall we shelter those that were once our brethren, that are perhaps still our friends, from the awful sentence which the Gospel denounces against all that reject it without any exception? As to the wretches that add insult and derision to their infidelity, we tremble to think of that load of guilt which they are bringing upon themselves; and how near their approach to the unpardonable sin, if they have not already committed it. For the rest, who behave in a more modest and sober manner, it will no doubt be a very difficult task to convince them: and so much the rather, as some of them, by too easy a transition, have renounced many of the most important principles of natural religion: nay, it might be added, even the whole of it, together with the Christian revelation. But the influences of divine grace are almighty. Let us recommend them to it, and omit no other proper method, either of recovering such as are already seduced; or at least of securing those who are not yet infected, but may be, as most of the youth are, especially in the most populous places, in imminent danger of the contagion. To this end let us add,

3. How reasonable it is, that Christians should form a familiar acquaintance with the great evidences of our common faith.

It is what we so apparently owe to the honor of God, to the interest of Christ, to the peace of our own souls, and the edification of others, that we hope we need not urge it at large, especially considering what has been said before. In consequence of all, let it be your care to make the evidences of Christianity the subject of your serious reflection and frequent converse. Especially study your Bibles, where such marks of truth and divinity are to be found, that we hope few who have familiary known them and have had a relish for them, were ever brought to make shipwreck of their faith as it is in Jesus. Above all, let it be your care, to act on the rules which are here laid down: and then you will find your faith growing in a happy proportion, and experience the truth of our Saviour's declaration, that if any man resolutely and faithfully do his will,

ne shall know of the Christian doctrine, whether it be of God. We verily believe, that it is the purity of its precepts which lies at the bottom of most men's opposition to it; or a natural pride of heart, which gives them an aversion to it; or a fond affectation of seeming wiser than others, in rejecting what most of their neighbors do profess to believe. When these unhappy prejudices and conceptions are, by divine grace, conquered and rooted out, the evidence of truth will daily appear with increasing lustre: as the light of the sun does to an eye recovering from the film with which it hath been overgrown, and which before had veiled it with midnight in the midst of noon.

4. How solicitous should we be to embrace and obey that Gospel, which comes attended with such abundant evidences!

We may undoubtedly address ourselves to most of our readers, and say as Paul did to King Agrippa: "Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest:" yet let me entreat and charge you not to rest here; but attentively to examine how far your hearts are affected, and your lives regulated by such a belief. The Christian revelation is a practical thing: and is heard, believed, and professed in vain, if it be not obeyed.

In this Gospel "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness of men:" but it is revealed with redoubled fury against that audacious sinner, "who holds the truth in unrighteousness." In this Gospel the blessed Jesus is exalted, both as a "Prince and Saviour;" and it is not with impunity, that the impenitent rebel can reject his yoke, and trample on his blood. What must they expect, who have poured contempt on such a Sovereign, and on such a Redeemer?

Let it be earnestly and frequently recollected, that this Gospel is the touchstone by which we are one day to be tried; the balance in which an impartial judge will weigh us: and must, on the whole, prove our everlasting triumph, or our everlasting torment. The Almighty did not introduce it with such solemn notice, such high expectation, such pompous miracles, such awful sanctions, that men might reject or dishonor it at pleasure; but it will certainly be found, to the greatest and meanest of those that hear it, "a savour of life unto life, or a savour of death unto death."

Let it therefore be your immediate care to inquire, which of hese it is likely to prove to your souls; remember it is so far from being a vain thing, that it is really your very life. If it as been hitherto despised, and that blessed Redeemer in whom t so evidently centers, has been neglected, assure yourselves, that all we have said in confirmation of its truth, proves only, that the "hand-writing of God" is set to your condemnation. Allow yourselves, therefore, not a moment's rest, till you have

with humble submission applied to his throne, while there is yet hope that it may be reversed.

And for you who have hitherto believed and obeyed the Gospel, let it be your care to defend and adorn it; "be blameless and harmless, the children of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, shining among them as lights in the world:" perhaps your example may not only serve to entertain their eyes, but "to guide their feet into the way of peace," and engage them also to join with you in "glorifying your Father which is in heaven:" above all, be careful to hold fast the form of sound words, and to adorn the doctrine of your blessed Saviour in all things.

THE

LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

ST. PETER

CHAPTER I.

Account of the Life of St. Peter, prior to his call to the Apostleship of the blessed Jesus.

St. Peter was born at Bethsaida, a city of Galilee, situate on the banks of the lake of Gennesareth, called also the sea of Galilee, from its being situated in that country, and the lake of Tiberias, from that city being built on its banks. The particular time of this great apostle's birth cannot be known; the Evangelist and other writers among the primitive Christians, having been silent with regard to this particular. It is, however, pretty certain, that he was a least ten years older than his Master; the circumstances of his being married, and in a settled course of life, when he first became a follower of the great Messiah, and that authority and respect the gravity of his person procured him among the rest of the apostles, sufficiently declare this conjecture to be just.

As he was a descendant of Abraham, he was circumcised according to the rites of the Mosaic law, and called by his parents Simon or Simeon, a name common at that time among the Jews. But after his becoming a disciple of the blessed Jesus, the additional title of Cephas was conferred upon him by his Master, to denote the firmness of his faith; the word Cephas, in the Syriac, the common language of the Jews at that time, signifying a stone or rock; and thence he is called, in Greek, *Petros*, and by us Peter, which implies the same thing.

With regard to the parents of St. Peter, the Evangelists have also been silent, except in telling us that his father's name was Jonah, who was highly honored by our blessed Saviour, who chose two of his sons, Andrew and Peter, to be his apostles,

and preachers of the glad tidings of salvation to the children of men.

St. Peter in his youth, was brought up to the trade of fishing on the lake of Bethsaida, famous for different kinds of fish, which excelled all others in the fineness of their taste.

Here he followed the trade of fishing, but afterwards removed to Capernaum, where he settled; for we find he had a house there when our Saviour began his public ministry, and there he paid tribute. Nicephorus tells us that Helen, the mother of Constantine, erected a beautiful church over the ruins of St. Peter's house, in honor of that apostle.

The business of Peter was both mean and toilsome; it exposed him to all the injuries of the weather, the tempestuousness of the sea, and the darkness and horror of the night, and all to acquire a mean livelihood for himself and family. But meanness of worldly degree is no obstacle to the favor of God: nay, if we review the state of Christianity, from its rise to the present period, we shall find that its friends and votaries consist rather of persons of humble and lowly stations of life, than of the great, the dignified, and the opulent.

And herein are manifested the wise and admirable methods used by Divine Providence, in making choice of such mean and unlikely instruments in planting and propagating the Christian religion in the world. Men who were destitute of the advantages of education, and brought up to the meanest employments, were chosen to confound the wise, and overturn the learning of the great. Such were the persons whom the Almighty sent to propagate the religion of his Son; to silence the wise, the Scribe and the disputer of this world, and to make foolish the wisdom of the earth. For though the Jews required a sign, and the Greeks sought after wisdom; though the preaching of a crucified Saviour made no impression on the former, and wisdom became of little avail to the latter; yet by this preaching God was pleased to save them that believed, and in the event made it appear, that the wisdom of God passeth all understanding—That so the honor of all may redound to himself, "that no flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord."

CHAPTER II.

The manner by which Peter arrived to the knowledge of the blessed Jesus, and of his call to the discipleship.

Sacred history hath not ascertained of what sect the apostle was. We know indeed, that his brother Andrew was a follower of John the Baptist, that preacher of repentance; and it is very unlikely that he, who was ready to carry his brother the early tidings of the Messiah, that the "sun of righteousness" was already risen in those parts, should not be equally solicitous to bring him under the discipline and influence of John the Baptist, the day-star which appeared to usher in the appearance of the Son of God. Besides, Peter's great readiness and curiosity at the first news of Christ's appearing, to come to him and converse with him, shows, that his expectation had been awakened, and some glimmering rays of hope conveyed to him by the preaching and ministry of John, who was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

He became acquainted with the immaculate Lamb of God, in the following manner: The blessed Jesus having spent thirty years in the solitude of a private life, had lately been baptized by John in Jordan, and there owned by the solemn attestation of heaven to be the Son of God; whereupon he was immediately hurried into the wilderness, and there for forty days maintained a personal contest with the devil. But having conquered this great enemy of mankind, he returned to "the place beyond Jordan," where John was baptizing his proselytes, and endeavoring to answer the Jews, who had sent a deputation to him to inquire concerning this new Messiah that appeared among them. To satisfy these curious inquirers of Israel, John faithfully related every thing he knew concerning him, gave him the greatest character, and soon after pointed him out to his disciples; upon which two of them presently followed the great Redeemer of mankind, one of which was Andrew, Simon's brother.

Nor did he conceal the joyful discovery he had made; for early in the morning he hastened to acquaint his brother Simon that he had found the Messiah. It is not enough to be happy alone: grace is a communicative principle, that, like the circles in the water, delights to multiply itself, and to diffuse its influences all around, especially on those whom nature has placed nearest to us. I have, said he, with rapture to his brother, found that eminent person so long and signally foretold by the

prophets. and whom all the devout and pious among the sons of Jacob so earnestly expected.

Simon who was one of those who waited for the redemption of Israel, ravished with the joyful news, and impatient of delay presently followed his brother to the place; and on his arrival our blessed Saviour immediately gave him a proof of his divinity ; saluting him at first sight by his name, and telling him both who he was, his name and kindred, and what title should soon be conferred upon him.

In order to avoid the prodigious throng of people, our great Redeemer often retired to some solitary place, to indulge the privacies of contemplation. In one of these retreats, on the banks of the sea of Galilee, the multitude found him out, and ran to him from the city. Our Saviour, therefore, to avoid the crowd. stepped into a fishing boat which lay near shore, and belonged to Simon Peter, who, together with his companions, were on shore, drying their nets, after an unsuccessful night spent in toil and labor. The blessed Jesus, who might have commanded, was pleased to entreat Peter, who now returned to his boat, to thrust off a little from the land, that he might instruct the people, who were gathering in prodigious crowds on the borders of the lake.

Peter gladly complied with the request of his Master, who delivered his heavenly doctrine to the people on the shore. As soon as he had ended his discourse, he resolved to seal it by a miracle, that the people might be persuaded he was "a teacher come from God." Accordingly he ordered Simon to row farther from the shore, and cast his net into the sea. To which Simon answered, that they had labored the preceding night, and had taken nothing; and, if they could not then succeed, there were little hopes of it now, as the day was far less proper for fishing than the night. But as his Master was pleased to command, he would obey; and accordingly he let down his net, when, to the astonishment both of him and of his companions, so great a multitude of fishes were enclosed, that they were obliged to call their partners to their assistance. Amazed at this miraculous drought of fishes, Simon Peter, in an ecstacy of admiration. blended with awe and humility, fell prostrate at his Master's feet, acknowledging himself a vile and sinful person, and thinking himself unworthy of being admitted into the presence of a person so immediately sent from God. But the compassionate Son of the Most High kindly removed his fears; telling him that this miracle was wrought to confirm his faith, and indicate to him that the Almighty had appointed a more noble employment for him, that of saving the souls of the children of men.

From this time Peter and his companions became the inseр-

arable and constant disciples of the great Messiah, living under the rules of his discipline and institutions.

CHAPTER III.

Peculiar transactions of this Apostle, from the time of his being chosen, to his blessed Master's entering the City of Jerusalem.

The blessed Jesus, having entered upon his important mission, thought proper to select some peculiar persons from among his followers to be constant witnesses of his miracles and doctrine, and who, after his departure, might be entrusted with the care of building his church, and planting that religion in the world, for which he himself left the mansions of heaven, and put on the veil of mortality. In order to this, he withdrew privately, in the evening, to a solitary mountain, where he spent the night in solemn addresses to his Almighty Father, for rendering the great work he was going to undertake prosperous and successful.

The next day, early in the morning, the disciples came to him, out of whom he made choice of twelve to be his apostles, and the attendants on his person.

These he afterwards invested with the power of working miracles, and sent them into different parts of Judea, in order to carry on with more rapidity the great work which he himself had so happily begun.

We have no farther account of St. Peter in particular, till the night after our Saviour's miraculously feeding the multitude in the wilderness. Jesus had ordered his disciples to take ship, and pass over to the other side, while he sent the multitude away. But a violent storm arising, they were in great danger of their lives, when their Master came unto them, walking on the surface of the boisterous billows, with the same ease as if it had been dry ground.

At his approach the disciples were greatly terrified, supposing they had seen a spirit. But their compassionate Master soon dispelled their fears, by telling them it was he himself, and therefore they had no reason to be terrified.

Peter, who was always remarkable for bold resolutions, desired his Master to give him leave to come to him on the water, and on obtaining permission, he left the ship, and walked on the sea to meet his Saviour. But when he heard the deep roar around him, and the waves increase, he began to be afraid.

and as his faith declined, his body sunk in the water; so that in the greatest agony he called for assistance to him who was able to save. Nor was his cry in vain; the compassionate Redeemer of mankind stretched out his hand, and again placed him on the surface of the water, with this gentle reproof, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" And no sooner was the blessed Jesus and his disciple entered into the ship, than the winds ceased, the waves subsided, and the ship was at the land whither they were going.

A miracle of this kind could not fail of astonishing the disciples, and convincing them of the divinity of his mission: accordingly they drew near and worshipped him, with this confession, 'Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

The inhabitants of Judea, who beheld with astonishment the miracles wrought by the blessed Jesus, had formed many conjectures concerning him. Our great Redeemer was not ignorant of this: but being willing to hear what account his disciples would give of the various opinions of the people, asked them what the world said concerning him? To which they replied, that some took him for John the Baptist, risen from the dead; some thought him to be Elias, and others Jeremiah, or one of the old prophets. He asked them what they themselves thought of him: to which Peter, in the name of the rest, answered, "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God," anointed and set apart by the Most High, to be the great King, Priest, and Prophet of Israel.

This full and comprehensive declaration of Peter satisfied the inquiry of our blessed Saviour, who answered, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

The disciples had no idea that their Master was to suffer death for the sins of the world; on the contrary, they considered him as immortal, having embibed the opinion of the Scribes and Pharisees, "that Christ abideth forever:" so that when the blessed Jesus told them of the sufferings he must undergo at Jerusalem, what affronts and indignities he must suffer, and be at last put to death with all the acts of torture and disgrace, by a sentence of the Jewish Sanhedrim, Peter, who could not endure the thought of his Master's suffering even the least punishment, much less those cruelties he had mentioned, and at last death itself, interrupted him very unseasonably, and said, "Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." He considered these sufferings as inconsistent with the character of the great Messiah, whom he expected would restore the splendor of the throne of David his father, and reduce all the kingdoms of the earth to his obedience. But our blessed Saviour who came down from heaven, to give his life a ransom for the

sins of the world, and who valued the redemption of mankind infinitely more than his own ease and safety, highly resented this speech of St. Peter, and accordingly returned this sharp reproof: "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me." Thy pernicious counsels in seeking to oppose the design for which I purposely left the courts of heaven, are offensive; and thou "savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."

Some time after, the great Redeemer of the souls of men, being to receive a specimen of his future glorification, took with him three of his most intimate apostles, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and went up into a very high mountain, and while they were employed in earnest addresses to the Almighty, he was transfigured before them, darting such lustre from his face, as exceeded the meridian rays of the sun in brightness; and such beams of light issued from his garments, as exceeded the light of the clearest day; an evident and sensible representation of that state, when the "just shall walk in white robes, and shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." During this heavenly scene, the great prophets, Moses and Elias appeared in all the brightness and majesty of a glorified state, familiarly conversing with him, and discoursing of the death and sufferings he was shortly to undergo, and his ascension to the heavenly regions of bliss and happiness.

In the mean time Peter and the two apostles were fallen asleep; but on their awaking were strangely surprised to see the Lord surrounded with so much glory, and those two great persons conversing with him. They, however, remained silent till those visitants from the courts of heaven were going to depart, when Peter, in rapture and ecstacy of mind, addressed himself to his Master, declared their infinite pleasure and delight in being favored with this glorious spectacle; and desired his leave to erect three tabernacles, one for him, one for Moses, and one for Elias. But while he was speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed these two great prophets, and a voice came from it, uttering these remarkable words, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." On which the apostles were seized with the utmost consternation, and fell upon their faces to the ground; but Jesus touching them, bid them dismiss their fears, and look up with confidence; they immediately obeyed, but saw their Master only.

After this heavenly scene our blessed Lord traveled through Galilee, and at his return to Capernaum, the tax-gatherers came to Peter and asked him, whether his Master was not obliged to pay tribute? When our blessed Saviour was informed of this demand, rather than give offence, he wrought a miracle to pay it. Our great Redeemer was now going, for the last time,

to Jerusalem: and he ordered two of his disciples, probably Peter and John, to fetch him an ass, that he might enter into the city on it, as had been foretold. The disciples obeyed their Master, and brought the ass to Jesus, who being mounted thereon, entered the city amidst the hosannas of a numerous multitude, with palm-branches in their hands, proclaiming at once both the majesty of a prince, and the triumph of a Saviour.

CHAPTER IV.

Life of St. Peter, from the time of the celebration of the last Passover to the Crucifiction of the great Redeemer.

The blessed Jesus proceeded from Jerusalem to Bethany, from whence he sent two of his disciples, Peter and John, to make preparations for his celebrating the passover.

Every thing being ready, our blessed Saviour and his apostles entered the house, and sat down to the table. But their great Master, who often taught them by example as well as precept, arose from his seat, laid aside his upper garment, took the towel, and pouring water into a basin, began to wash his disciples' feet, to teach them humility and charity, by his own example. But on his coming to Peter, he would by no means admit his Master to perform so mean and condescending an office. What! the Son of God stoop to wash the feet of a sinful mortal! A thought which shocked the apostle, who strenuously declared, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." But the blessed Jesus told him, that if he washed him not, he could have no part with him; intimating, that this action was mystical, and signified the remission of sins, and the purifying virtue of the Spirit of the Most High, to be poured upon all true Christians. This answer sufficiently removed the scruples of Peter, who cried out, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Wash me in every part, rather than let me lose my portion in thee.

The blessed Jesus, having set this pattern of humility, began to reflect on his approaching sufferings, and on the person who should betray him into the hands of wicked and cruel men, telling them, that not a stranger, or an enemy, but one of his friends, one of his apostles, and even one of them who then sat at the table would betray him.

This declaration exceedingly affected them all in general, and Peter in particular, who made signs to St. John, to ask him particularly who it was. Jesus complied with this request, and gave them to understand that it was Judas Iscariot.

Our great Redeemer now began the institution of his supper, that great and solemn institution, which he resolved to leave behind him, to be constantly celebrated in his church, as a standing monument of his love in dying for mankind; telling them at the same time that he himself was now going to leave them, and that "whither he went, they could not come." Peter, not well understanding what he meant, asked him whither he was going. To which our great Redeemer replied, that he was going to that place whither he could not now, but should hereafter follow him: intimating the martyrdom he was to suffer for his Master's religion. Peter answered, that he was ready now to follow him, even if it required him to lay down his life. This confident presumption was not at all agreeable to the blessed Jesus, who told him he had promised great things, but would be so far from performing them, that before "the cock crew" he would deny him thrice.

Supper being now ended, they sung an hymn, and departed to the Mount of Olives; where Jesus again put them in mind how greatly the things he was going to suffer would offend them. To which Peter replied, that "though all men should be offended because of him, yet he himself would never be offended." How far will an indiscreet zeal and affection transport even a good man into vanity and presumption! Peter questions the fidelity of others, but never doubts his own: though his Lord had just before reproved him for his self-sufficiency. This confidence of Peter inspired the rest of the apostles with courage: so that they declared their constant and unshaken adherence to their Master.

They now repaired to the garden of Gethsemane; and leaving the rest of the apostles near the entrance, our blessed Saviour, taking with him Peter, James, and John, retired into the most solitary part of the garden, to enter on the preparatory scene of the great tragedy that was now approaching.

Here the blessed Jesus labored under the bitterest agony that ever human nature suffered, during which he prayed with the utmost fervency to his Father, "offering up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."

While our blessed Redeemer was thus interceding with the Almighty, his three disciples were fallen asleep, though he had made three several visits to them, and calling to Peter, asked him if he could not watch one hour with him. Advising them all to watch and pray, that they might not enter into tempta-

tion, adding, "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

What incomparable sweetness! what generous candor did the Redeemer of mankind display on this occasion! he passed the most charitable censure upon an action which malice and ill nature would have painted in colors as black as the shades of darkness.

The disciples were drowned in a profound security, and were buried in a deep sleep, and though often awaked and informed of the approaching tragedy, they little regarded the admonitions, as if nothing but ease and softness engaged their thoughts: an action which seemed to imply the most amazing ingratitude, and the highest disregard for their Lord and Master.

But he who was compassion itself, would not impute it to their want of affection, or disregard for his safety: he considered it merely as the effect of their infirmities, and made an excuse for them when they could make none for themselves; teaching us the useful lesson of putting the most favorable construction on the actions of others: and to imitate the bee and not the spider, by sucking honey, instead of poison, from the various transactions of human life.

While he was discoursing with them, a band of soldiers, from the chief priests and elders, preceded by the traitor Judas, to conduct and direct them, rushed into the garden, and seized the great high priest of our profession. Peter, whose ungovernable zeal would admit of no restraint, drew his sword, and, without the least order from his Master, struck at one of the persons who seemed to be remarkably busy in binding Jesus, and cut off his right ear. This wild and unwarrantable zeal was very offensive to his Master, who rebuked Peter, and entreated the patience of the soldiers while he miraculously healed the wound.

But now the fidelity of the apostles, which they had urged with so much confidence, was put to the trial. They saw their Master in the hands of a rude and inconsiderate band of men: and therefore should have exerted their power to release him, or at least have been the companions of his sufferings, and endeavored by every kind, endearing action, to have lessened his grief. But alas! instead of assisting or comforting their great Master, they forsook him and fled.

The soldiers after binding Jesus, led him away, and delivered him to the chief priests and elders, who carried him from one tribunal to another, first to Annas, and then to Caiaphas, where the Jewish Sanhedrim were assembled, in order to try and condemn him.

In the mean time, Peter, who had followed the other disciples in their flight, recovered his spirits, and being encouraged by his companion St. John, returned to seek his Master. Seeing him leading to the high priest's hall, he followed at a distance to know the event: but on his coming to the door, was refused admittance, till one of the disciples who was acquainted there, came out, and prevailed upon the servant who kept the door, to let him in. Peter, being admitted, repaired to the fire, burning in the middle of the hall, round which the officers and servants were standing; where being observed by the maid servant, who let him in, she charged him with being one of Christ's disciples: but Peter publicly denied the charge, declaring that he did not know him, and presently withdrew into the porch, where being secluded from the people, the reflection of his mind awakened his conscience into a quick sense of his duty, and the promise he had a few hours before made to his Master. But alas! human nature, when left to itself, is remarkably frail and inconstant. This Peter sufficiently experienced; for while he continued in the porch, another maid met him, and charged him with being one of the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, which Peter firmly denied, and, the better to gain belief, ratified it with an oath.

About an hour after this, the servant of the high priest, he whose ear Peter had cut off, charged him with being a disciple of Christ, and that he himself had seen him in the garden with him: adding that his very speech sufficiently proved that he was a Galilean. Peter, however, still denied the fact; and, to his sin, ratified it not only by an oath, but a solemn curse and execration, that "he was not the person," and that "he knew not the man." But no sooner had he uttered this denial, (which was the third time) than the "cock crew;" at which his Master turned about, and earnestly looked upon him in a manner that pierced him to the heart, and brought to his remembrance what his Saviour had more than once foretold, namely, that he would basely and shamefully deny him. Peter was now no longer able to contain his sorrow: he flew from the palace of the high priest, and "wept bitterly," passionately bewailing his folly, and the aggravations of his sin.

The fall of St. Peter should convince us of the miserable frailty, even of the best of men, and effectually subdue those vain confidences which are apt to rise in our hearts, from our own supposed strength and virtue. For, as this great disciple fell in so scandalous a manner, who shall hereafter dare to depend upon the highest degree of knowledge, when one so wise, so perfectly satisfied of the truth of the Christian doctrine, was, after the fullest convictions of his own conscience, so weak and frail, as to deny and abjure his Lord who instructed and bought

him even at the price of his own blood? Who shall presume upon his best resolutions, when he who declared so firm a purpose of adhering to Jesus, did, within a few hours peremptorily and solemnly disown that very person, for whose sake he was lately ready and disposed to lay down his life.

We ought, therefore, on all occasions, to pray for and rely on the Divine assistance, which alone can enable us to stand in a day of trial. There is, indeed, no reason to doubt that St. Peter at that time spoke the very sense of his soul; that he had an honest and sincere heart, was steadfastly determined, and as he thought able to perform, what, with so much piety and affection, he intended and professed. But his misfortune was, that he did not consider the infirmities of human nature, promising, in the warmth of his zeal, more than he was able to perform. He relied on his own integrity, thinking good resolutions a sufficient defence against the most violent temptations. But when the assault was made, and danger with her terrifying aspect, appeared, the event sufficiently proved, that how willing soever the spirit might be, yet the flesh was exceedingly frail and weak.

We have in St. Peter an example for our instruction. The opinion of his own strength proved his ruin. So dangerous and fatal is it to lean on our own understandings; to be wise, good, and safe, in our own conceit; when all our sufficiency, all our safety, is of God.

CHAPTER V.

An account of what befell this Apostle from the Resurrection of his blessed Master, to his Ascension into Heaven.

It is certain, from various circumstances, that Peter, after the crucifixion of his Lord and Master, stayed at Jerusalem, or at least in the neighborhood; for when Mary Magdalene returned from the sepulchre to inform the disciples that the stone was rolled away from the door, and the body not to be found, Peter and John set out immediately towards the garden. John, who was the younger, arrived at the sepulchre first, looked into it, but did not enter, either out of fear or reverence to our Saviour. Peter came soon after, and resolutely went into the sepulchre, where he found the linen clothes lying together in one place, and the napkin that was about his head wrapped together in another, a sufficient indication that the body was not stolen

away; for had that been the case, so much care and order would not have been observed in disposing of the linen clothes.

But Peter did not wait long in suspense, with regard to his great Lord and Master; for the same day Jesus appeared to him; and as he was the first of the disciples who had made a signal confession of the divinity of the Messiah's mission, so it was reasonable he should first see him, after his resurrection, and at the same time to convince him that the crime he had been guilty of, in denying him, was pardoned, and that he was come, like the good Samaritan, to pour oil into the wounded conscience.

Soon after the apostles prepared to obey the command of their great Master, of retiring into Galilee, and we find that Peter, Nathaniel, the two sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples, returned to their old trade of fishing in the lake.

One morning early, as they were laboring at their employment, having spent the whole night to no purpose, they saw on the shore a grave person, who called to them, and asked them if they had any meat? To which they answered, No. Cast then, replied he, the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They followed his directions, and caught a prodigious number of large fish. Astonished at such remarkable success, the disciples looked upon one another for some time, till St. John told Peter, that the person on the shore was, doubtless, their great Lord and Master, whom the winds, the sea, and the inhabitants of the watery region, were ready to obey.

Peter no sooner heard the beloved disciple declare his opinion concerning the stranger, than his zeal took fire, and, notwithstanding the coldness of the season, he girt on his fisher's coat, threw himself into the sea, and swam to shore; his impatience to be with his dear Lord and Master not suffering him to stay the few minutes necessary to bring the ship to land.

As soon as the disciples came on shore, they found a fire kindled, and fish laid upon it, either immediately created by the power of their divine Master, or which came ashore of its own accord, and offered itself to his hand. But notwithstanding there were fish already on the fire, he ordered them to bring those they had now caught, and dress them for their repast, he himself eating with them; both to give them an instance of mutual love and friendship, and also to assure them of the truth of his human nature, since he was risen from the dead.

When the repast was ended, our blessed Saviour addressed himself particularly to Peter, urging him to the utmost diligence in the care of souls: and because he knew that nothing but a sincere love to himself could support him under the trouble and dangers of so laborious and difficult an employment, he

inquired of him, whether he loved him more than the rest of the apostles: mildly reproving him for his over-confident resolution. Peter, whom fatal experience had taught humility, modestly answered, that none knew so well as himself the integrity of his affections. Thou knowest the hearts of all men, nothing is hid from thee, and therefore thou knowest that I love thee. The question was three several times repeated by our blessed Saviour, and as oftentimes answered by the apostle; it being but just, that he, who by a threefold denial had given so much reason to question his affection, should now by a threefold confession, give more than common assurance of his sincere love to his Master; and to each of these confessions our great Redeemer added this signal trial of his affection, "Feed my sheep." Instruct and teach them with the utmost care, and the utmost tenderness.

The blessed Jesus having thus engaged Peter to a cheerful compliance with the dangers that might attend the discharge of his office, particularly intimated to him the fate that would attend him; telling him, that when he was young, he girt himself, lived at his pleasure, and went wherever his fancy directed him; but when he should reach the term of old age, he should stretch forth his hands, and another should gird and bind him, and lead him whither he had no desire to go, intimating as the Evangelist tells us, "by what death he should glorify God."

Peter was well pleased to drink the bitter cup and make his confession as public as his denial, provided all would be sufficient to atone for his former sin. And seeing John following, he asked his great Master, what should be his fate, and whether he, who had been the object of his Master's love in his life-time, should not have as honorable a death as he that had denied him? To which Jesus replied, It doth not concern thee to know how I shall dispose of events, with regard to him: he shall see the destruction of the Jewish nation, and then go down to the chambers of the dust in peace.

Not long after, our blessed Saviour appeared to his disciples at Jerusalem, to take his last farewell of them who had attended him during his public ministry among the sons of men. He led them out as far as Bethany, a small village on the Mount of Olives, where he briefly told them that they were the persons he had chosen to be the witnesses, both of his death and resurrection; a testimony which they should publish in every part of the world. In order to which, he would, after his ascension into heaven, pour out his spirit upon them, in an extraordinary manner, that they might be the better enabled to struggle with that violent rage and fury with which the doctrine of the gospel would be opposed by men and devils. Adding, that in the mean time, they should return

to Jerusalem, and there wait till those miraculous powers were given them from on high.

Having finished this discourse, he laid hands upon them, and gave them his solemn benediction; during which he was taken from them, and received up into the regions of the heavenly Canaan. The apostles, who beheld their Master visibly ascend into heaven, were filled with a greater sense of his glory than they had ever been while he conversed with them familiarly on earth. And having performed their solemn adoration to him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, there to wait for the accomplishment of their great Master's promise. How sudden a change was now wrought in the minds of the apostles! They who were lately overwhelmed with sorrow, at the very mention of their Lord's departure from them, beheld him now with joy and triumph; they were fully satisfied of his glorious advancement to the right hand of Omnipotence, and of that peculiar care and providence which they were sure he would exercise over them, in pursuance of those great trusts he had committed to their care.

CHAPTER VI.

Transactions of Peter, from the Ascension of his blessed Master, to the dispersion of the church at Jerusalem.

The apostles, though deprived of the personal presence of their dear Lord and Master, were indefatigable in fulfilling the commission they had received from him. The first object that engaged their attention, after their return to Jerusalem, was to fill up the vacancy in their number, lately made by the unhappy fall and apostacy of Judas. In order to this, they called together the church, and entered into "an upper room," when Peter, as president of the assembly, proposed to them the choice of a new apostle.

He put them in mind that Judas, one of the disciples of their great and beloved Master, being betrayed by his covetous and insatiable temper, had lately fallen from the honor of his place and ministry. That this was no more than what the prophet had long since foretold should come to pass, and that the care of the church, which had been committed to him, should devolve upon another; that therefore it was highly necessary that some person who had been familiarly conversant with the blessed Jesus, from first to last, and consequently, a competent witness

both of his doctrine and miracles, his death, resurrection, and ascension, should be substituted in his room.

After filling up the vacancy in the apostolic number, they spent their time in prayer and meditation, till the feast of Pentecost; when the promise of their great Master in sending the Holy Ghost was fulfilled. The christian assembly were met as usual to perform the public services of their worship, when suddenly a sound, like that of a mighty wind, rushed in upon them, representing the powerful efficacy of that divine spirit which was now to be communicated to them. After which there appeared small flames of fire, which, in the shape of cloven tongues, descended and sat upon the head of each of them, to denote that their enjoyment of this gift should be constant and perpetual; and not like the prophets of old, who were inspired only at some particular times and seasons. Upon this they were all immediately filled with the Holy Ghost, which, in an instant, enabled them to speak fluently several languages they had never learned, and probably never heard.

The report of so sudden and strange an action, was soon spread through every part of Jerusalem, which at that time was full of Jewish proselytes, "devout men of every nation under heaven, Parthians, Medes, Elamites, the dwellers in Mesopotamia and Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, the parts of Lybia and Cyrene," from Rome, from Crete, and from Arabia. These no sooner heard of this miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit, than they flocked in prodigious numbers to the christian assembly, where they were amazed to hear these Galileans speaking to them in their own native languages, so various and so very different from one another. And it could not fail of exceedingly increasing the wonder, to reflect on the meanness of the speakers, who were neither assisted by genius, polished by education, or improved by use and custom. The disciples were destitute of all these assistances; their parts were mean, their education trifling, and their experience in speaking before great assemblies, trifling. Yet now these persons spoke boldly, and with the greatest propriety, in various languages. Nor were their discourses filled with idle stories, or the follies of a luxuriant fancy. No, they expatiated on the great and admirable works of Omnipotence, and the mysteries of the Gospel, which human apprehension could never discover.

This surprising transaction had different effects on the minds of the people: some attributing it to the effect of a miracle, and others to the power and strength of "new wine." Upon which the apostles all stood up, and Peter in the name of the rest, undertook to confute this injurious calumny.

The effect of his discourse was equally wonderful and surprising; for great numbers of those, who before ridiculed the religion of Jesus, now acknowledged him for their Saviour, and flew to him for refuge from the impending storm: and St. Luke tells us, that there were that day added to the church no less than three thousand souls, who were all baptized and received into the flock of the great Shepherd of Israel, the bishop of our souls. A quick and plentiful harvest indeed! "This was the Lord's doings, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

Soon after this wonderful conversion, Peter and John, going up to the temple about three in the afternoon, near the conclusion of one of the solemn hours of prayer, saw a poor impotent cripple, near forty years of age, who had been lame from his birth, lying at the "beautiful gate of the temple," and asking alms of those who entered the sacred edifice. This miserable object moved their compassion; and Peter beholding him with attention, said, The riches of this world, the silver and gold so highly coveted by the sons of men, are not in my power to bestow; but I possess the power of restoring life and health, and am ready to assist thee.

Then taking the man by the hand, he commanded him in the name of "Jesus of Nazareth, to rise up and walk." Immediately the nerves and sinews were strengthened, and the several parts of the diseased members performed their natural functions. Upon which the man accompanied them into the temple, walking, exulting, and praising God.

So strange and extraordinary a cure filled the minds of the people with admiration, and their curiosity drew them round the apostle, to view the man who had performed it. Peter, seeing the multitude gathering round them, took the opportunity of speaking to them in the following manner: "Men and brethren, this remarkable cure should not excite your admiration of us, as if we had performed it by our own power. It was wrought in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, our crucified Master, by the power of that very Christ, that holy and just person, whom you yourselves denied, and delivered to Pilate, nay, and preferred a murderer before him, when the governor was desirous of letting him go. But though you have put him to death, yet we are witnesses that He hath raised him again from the dead, and that he is ascended into heaven, where he will remain till the great and tremendous day of general restitution."

While Peter was speaking to the people in one part of the temple, John was, in all probability, doing the same in the other; and the success plainly indicated how powerful the preaching of the apostles was; five thousand persons embra-

cing the doctrines of the Gospel, and acknowledging the crucified Jesus for their Lord and Saviour.

Such amazing success could not fail of exciting the attention and envy of the rulers of Israel. Accordingly, the priests and Sadducees repaired to the Roman magistrate, and intimated to him, that, in all probability, this concourse of people would prove the cause of a tumult and insurrection. Upon this information, the captain of the temple seized on the apostles, and cast them into prison.

The next day they were carried before the Jewish Sanhedrim; and being asked by what power and authority they had done this, Peter boldly answered, "Be it known unto you, and to all the descendants of Jacob, that this miracle was wrought wholly in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye yourselves have crucified and slain, and whom the Almighty hath raised again from the dead. This is the stone which your builders refused, and which is become the head of the corner. Nor is there any other way, by which you, or any of the sons of men can be saved, but by this crucified Saviour."

The boldness of the apostle was admired by all, even by the court of the Sanhedrim. And it should be remembered, that these very judges were the persons who had so lately condemned the blessed Jesus himself, and had no other way of coloring their proceedings, than by a second act of cruelty; that the apostles did not charge them with the crime of crucifying the Son of God in secret, but in the open court of Judicature, and in the hearing of all the people.

The labors of the apostles were crowned with abundant success, and it seems that such was the aversion of the inveterate Jews to those who became converts to the faith of Christ, that they were deprived of business, in their respective callings; for we find that the professors of the religion of the holy Jesus sold their effects, and brought the money to the apostles, that they might deposit it in one common treasury, and from thence supply the several exigencies of the church.

But hypocrisy was not unknown among the professors of religion even in these primitive times. Ananias, and his wife Sapphira, having embraced the doctrines of the Gospel, pretended to follow the free and generous spirit of these times by consecrating and devoting their estate to the honor of God, and the necessities of the church. Accordingly they sold their possessions, and brought part of the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet; hoping to deceive them, though guided by the spirit of Omnipotence. But Peter, at his first coming in, asked Ananias, how he could suffer Satan to fill his heart with such enormous wickedness, as to think "to deceive the Holy Ghost?" That before it was sold, it was wholly in his own

power, and afterwards the money was entirely at his own disposal; so that his action was capable of no other interpretation, than that he had not only abused an injured man, but mocked the Almighty himself, who he must know was privy to his most secret thoughts.

The apostle had no sooner finished, than Ananias, to the great terror of all that were present, fell down dead, by a stroke from heaven.

Not long after, his wife came in, whom Peter reproved in the same manner he had done her husband, adding, that she should immediately end her life in the same awful manner: upon which she was smitten by the hand of Omnipotence, and fell down dead; sharing with her husband in the punishment, as she had before in the heinous crime. This remarkable instance of severity filled all the converts with fear and trembling, and prevented, in a great measure, that hypocrisy and dissimulation, by which others might flatter themselves to deceive the church.

But such instances of severity were very extraordinary: the power of the apostles was generally exerted in works of mercy and beneficence towards the sons and daughters of affliction. They cured all kinds of diseases, and cast out devils; so that they brought the sick into the streets, and laid them upon beds and couches, that the shadow at least of Peter, as he passed by, might cover some of them; well knowing a single touch or word, from either of the apostles, was sufficient to remove the most inveterate diseases.

CHAPTER VII.

Concluding scenes of St. Peter's Life.

The Christian doctrine had been propagated hitherto without much violence or opposition, in Jerusalem, but now a storm commenced with the death of the protomartyr Stephen, nor did it end but with the dispersion of the disciples, by which means the glad tidings of the Gospel, which had till now been confined to Judea was preached to the Gentile world, and an ancient prophecy fulfilled, which says, "Out of Sion shall go forth the law and the word of the law from Jerusalem." Thus does the Almighty bring good out of evil, and cause the malicious intentions of the wicked to redound to his praise.

The storm, though violent, being at length blown over, the church enjoyed a time of calmness and security; during which, St. Peter went to visit the churches lately planted in those parts, by the disciples whom the persecution had dispersed. And at his arrival at Lydda, he miraculously healed Æneas, who had been afflicted with the palsy, and confined to his bed eight years; but on Peter's bidding him arise in the name of Jesus, he was immediately restored to perfect health. Nor was the success of his miracle confined to Æneas and his family; the fame of it was blazed through all the neighboring country, and many believed in the doctrine of the Son of God. It was even known at Joppa, a sea-port town about six miles from Lydda, and the brethren immediately sent for Peter, on the following melancholy occasion: Tabitha, whose Greek name was Dorcas, a woman venerable for her piety and extensive charity, was lately dead, to the great loss of mankind, who loved genuine benevolence, especially the poor and afflicted, who were supported by her charity.

At Peter's arrival, he found her dressed for funeral solemnity, and surrounded by mournful widows, who showed the coats and garments wherewith she had clothed them, the monuments of her liberality. But Peter put them all out, and kneeling down, prayed with the utmost fervency; then turning to the body, he commanded her to arise, and taking her by the hand, presented her in perfect health to her friends and others, who were assembled to pay their last duties to so good a woman. This miracle confirmed those who had newly embraced the doctrine of Jesus, and converted many more to the faith. After which he staid a considerable time at Joppa, lodging in the house of one Simon, a tanner.

Peter, after having finished his visitation to the new planted churches, returned to Jerusalem, and was indefatigable in instructing the converts in the religion of Jesus, and preaching the glad tidings of salvation to the descendants of Jacob. But he did not long continue in this pleasing course; Herod Agrippa, in order to ingratiate himself into the favor of the Jews, put the apostle James to death, and finding the action was highly acceptable to that stiff-necked people, he resolved to extend his cruelty to Peter, and accordingly cast him into prison. But the churches were incessant in their prayers to God for his safety; and what have mortals to fear, when guarded by the hand of Omnipotence? Herod was persuaded he should soon accomplish his intention, and sacrifice Peter to the insatiable cruelty of the Jews.

But the night before this intended execution, a messenger from the court of heaven visited the gloomy horrors of the dungeon, where he found Peter asleep between his keepers. The angel

raised him up, took off his chains, and ordered him to gird on his garments, and follow him. Peter obeyed, and having passed through the first and second watch, they came to the iron gate leading to the city, which opened to them of its own accord. The angel also accompanied him through one of the streets, and then departed from him; on which Peter came to himself, and perceived that it was no vision, but that his great and beloved Master had really sent a messenger from above, and released him from prison. He, therefore, repaired to the house of Mary where the church was assembled, and offering up their prayers to the throne of grace for his safety. On his knocking at the door, a maid who came to let him in, knowing his voice, ran back to tell them that Peter was at the door; which they at first considered as the effect of fancy; but the damsel continuing to affirm that it was really true, they concluded it was his angel, or some messenger sent from the court of heaven. But, on opening the door they were convinced of their mistake, finding that it was really Peter himself, who briefly told them how he was delivered; and desiring them to inform his brethren of his being set at liberty, retired to another place.

In the morning the officers came from Herod to the prison, with orders to bring Peter out to the people, who were gathered together to behold his execution. But when they came to the prison, the keepers informed them that the apostle had made his escape; which so exasperated Herod, that he commanded those who were entrusted with the care of the prisoner, to be put to death.

As we have now related the principle transactions of this apostle, that are founded on Scripture authority, we shall have recourse to ancient historians for the residue of his life.

St. Peter had preached the Gospel in various parts of the world, enlarging the kingdom of his great Master, and spreading the glad tidings of salvation among the inhabitants of various countries; and among the rest those of Rome, then the mistress of the world. In that capital he is said to have continued several years, till the emperor Claudius, taking advantage of some seditious tumults raised by the Jews, published an edict whereby they were banished from Rome, and among the rest St. Peter, who returned to Jerusalem, and was present at the synod already mentioned. But how long he continued in the capital of Judea is uncertain; for we have no account of his transactions for many years. This, however, is certain, that he was not idle in the service of his great Master; and Eusebius tells us, from Metaphrastus, that he visited several of the western parts, and particularly the island of Great Britain; where he continued several years, spreading the glad tidings of salvation in these remote parts, and converting the several nations to the Christian faith.

Towards the latter end of the reign of Nero, when Peter was in Rome, orders were given by that emperor for apprehending him, together with his companion, Paul.

St. Ambrose tells us, that when the people perceived the danger to which St. Peter was now exposed, they prayed him to quit Rome, and repair for a while to some secure retreat, that his life might be preserved for the benefit of the church. Peter, with great reluctance, yielded to their entreaties, and made his escape by night; but as he passed the gate, he was met by a person in the form of his great and beloved Master, and on his asking him whither he was going, answered, "To Rome, to be crucified a second time:" which Peter taking for a reproof of his cowardice, returned again into the city, and was soon after apprehended, and cast, together with St. Paul, into the Mamertime prison. Here they were confined eight or nine months; but spent their time in the exercise of religion, especially in preaching to the prisoners, and those who resorted to them. And during this confinement, it is generally thought, St. Peter wrote the second epistle to the dispersed Jews, wherein he endeavors to confirm them in the belief and practice of Christianity, and to fortify them against those poisonous and pernicious principles and actions which even then began to break in upon the Christian church.

Nero at last returning from Achaia, entered Rome in triumph, and soon after his arrival, resolved that the apostles should fall as victims and sacrifices to his cruelties and revenge. While the fatal stroke was daily expected, the Christians in Rome were continually offering up their prayers to heaven to protect those two holy persons. But the Almighty was now willing to put an end to their sorrows; and after sealing the truth they had preached with their own blood, to receive them into the regions of eternal bliss and happiness, and exchange their crowns of martyrdom for crowns of glory. Accordingly they were both condemned by the cruel emperor of Rome: and St. Peter having taken his farewell of the brethren, especially of St. Paul, was taken from the prison and led to the top of the Vatican mount, near the Tiber, where he was sentenced to surrender up his life on the cross.

At his coming to the place of execution, he begged the favor of the officers, that he might not be crucified in the common manner, but with his head downward; affirming that he was unworthy to suffer in the same posture in which his Lord had suffered before him. This request was accordingly complied with; and the great apostle St. Peter surrendered up his soul into the hands of his great and beneficent Master, who came down from heaven to ransom mankind from destruction, and open for them the gates of the heavenly Canaan.

His body, being taken down from the cross, is said to have been embalmed by Mercellimus, the presbyter, after the manner of the Jews, and then buried in the Vatican, near the Appian way, two miles from Rome.

ST. PAUL.

CHAPTER I.

Account of this Apostle, from his Birth till his Conversion to the Christian Faith.

This great apostle of the Gentiles, was a descendant from the ancient stock of Abraham. He belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, the youngest son of Jacob. Tarsus the place of his nativity, was the metropolis of Cilicia, and situated about three hundred miles distant from Jerusalem; it was exceedingly rich and populous, and a Roman municipium, or free corporation, invested with the privileges of Rome by the two first emperors, as a reward for the citizens' firm adherence to the Cæsars in the rebellion of Crassus. St. Paul was therefore born a Roman citizen, and he often pleads this privilege on his trials.

It was common for the inhabitants of Tarsus to send their children into other cities for learning and improvement; especially to Jerusalem, where they were so numerous, that they had a synagogue of their own, called the synagogue of the Cilicians. To this capital our apostle was also sent, and brought up at the school of that eminent rabbi, Gamaliel, in the most exact knowledge of the law of Moses. Nor did he fail to profit by the instructions of that great master; for he so diligently conformed himself to precepts, that, without boasting, he asserts of himself, that touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless, and defied even his enemies to allege any thing to the contrary, even in his youth. He joined himself to the sect of the Pharisees, the most strict order of the Jewish religion, but, at the same time, the proudest, and the greatest enemies to Christ and his holy religion.

With regard to his double capacity, of Jewish extraction and Roman freedom, he had two names, Saul and Paul; the former Hebrew, and the latter Latin. We must also consider his trade of tent-making as a part of his education; it being a constant practice of the Jews to bring up their children to some honest

calling, that, in case of necessity, they might provide for themselves by the labor of their own hands.

Saul having obtained a thorough knowledge of the sciences cultivated by the Jews, and being naturally of a very hot and fiery temper, became a great champion of the law of Moses, and the tradition of the elders, which he considered as zeal for God. This rendered him impatient of all opposition to the doctrines and tenets he had imbibed, and a vehement blasphemer and persecutor of the Christians, who were commonly reputed the enemies and destroyers of the Jewish economy.

The first action we find him engaged in, was the disputation he and his countrymen had with the martyr Stephen, with regard to the Messiah. The Christian was too hard for them in the dispute: but they were too powerful for him in their civil interests: for being enraged at his convincing arguments, they carried him before the high priest, who by false accusations condemned him to death. How far Saul was concerned in this cruel action, is impossible to say; all we know is, that he "kept the raiment of them that slew him."

The storm of persecution against the church being thus begun, it increased prodigiously, and the poor Christians of Jerusalem were miserably harrassed and dispersed. In this persecution our apostle was a principal agent, searching all the adjacent parts for the afflicted saints, beating some in the synagogue, inflicting other cruelties, confining some in prison, and procuring others to be put to death.

Nor could Jerusalem and the adjacent parts confine his fiery zeal: he applied to the Sanhedrim, and procured a commission from that court to extend his persecution to Damascus. How infernally insatiable is the fury of a misguided zeal! How restless and unwearied in its designs of cruelty! It had already sufficiently harrassed the poor Christians at Jerusalem, but not content with this, it persecuted them even to strange cities, even to Damascus itself, whither many of them had fled for shelter, resolving to bring them back to Jerusalem, in order to their punishment and execution.

But it was the will of Providence he should be employed in a work of a very different nature; and accordingly, he was stopped in his journey. For as he was traveling between Jerusalem and Damascus, to execute the commission of the Jewish Sanhedrim, a refulgent light, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, darted upon him; at which both he and his companions were terribly amazed and confounded, and immediately fell prostrate on the ground. While they lay in this state, a voice was heard, in the Hebrew language, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" To which Saul replied, "Who art thou, Lord?" And was immediately answered, "I am Jesus, whom

thou persecutest: It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." As if the blessed Jesus had said, "All thy attempts to extirpate the faith in me will prove abortive; and like kicking against the spikes, wound and torment thyself."

Saul was sufficiently convinced of his folly in having acted against Jesus, whom he was now assured to be the true Messiah, and asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" On which the blessed Jesus replied, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

The company which were with him heard the voice, but did not see the person who spake from heaven. In all probability they were ignorant of the Hebrew language, and therefore only heard a confused sound; for the apostle himself tells, that "they heard not the voice of him that spake;" that is, they did not understand what was spoken.

The apostle now arose from the earth, but found himself deprived of sight: the resplendent brightness of the vision being too intense for mortal eyes to behold. His companions, therefore, led him by the hand to the city of Damascus, where he entered the house of Judas, and remained there three days without sight, nor did he either eat or drink, but spent his time in prayer to the Almighty, beseeching him to pardon the sins of his ignorance, and blinded zeal.

In the mean time our blessed Saviour appeared in a vision to Ananias, a very devout and religious man, highly esteemed by all the inhabitants of Damascus. "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street, which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas, for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for behold he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias, coming in and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight."

Ananias, who was ever ready to obey the commands of the Most High, startled at the name, having heard of the bloody practices of Saul at Jerusalem, and what commission he was now come to execute in Damascus. He, therefore, suspected that his conversion was nothing more than a snare artfully laid by him against the Christians. But our blessed Saviour soon removed his apprehensions, by telling him that his suspicions were entirely destitute of foundation; and that he had now taken him, as a chosen vessel, to preach the Gospel both to the Jews and Gentiles, and even before the greatest monarchs of the earth. "Go thy way," said he, "for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and the kings, and the children of Israel." At the same time he acquainted him with the great persecutions he should undergo for the sake of the Gospel: "For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

Thus quieted the fears of Ananias, who immediately obeyed the heavenly vision, repaired to the house of Judas, and, laying his hands upon Saul, addressed him in words to this effect:—"That Jesus," said he, "who appeared to thee in the way, hath sent me to restore thy sight, and by the infusion of his Spirit to give thee the knowledge of those truths which thou hast blindly and ignorantly persecuted; but who now is willing to receive thee by baptism into his church, and make thee a member of his body."

This speech was no sooner pronounced, than there fell from his eyes thick films, resembling scales, and he received his sight: and after baptism conversed with the Christians at Damascus. Nor did he only converse with them, he also, to the great astonishment of the whole church, preached the Gospel to those Christians he came with an intention to destroy, at the same time boldly asserting, "that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God;" and proving it to the Jews, with such demonstrative evidence, that they were confounded, and found it impossible to answer him.

CHAPTER II.

Continuation of the Life of St. Paul, from the time of his Conversion, till the Council was held at Jerusalem.

The miraculous convert, at the instance of the divine command, retired into Arabia Petræa, where he received a full revelation of all the mysteries of Christianity: for he himself declares that he conversed not with flesh and blood. Having preached in several parts of that country some time, he returned again to Damascus, applying himself, with the utmost assiduity, to the great work of the ministry, frequenting the synagogues there, powerfully confuting the objections commonly made by the descendants of Jacob against Jesus of Nazareth, and converting great numbers of Jews and Gentiles.

He was, indeed, remarkably zealous in his preaching, and blessed with a very extraordinary method of reasoning, whereby he proved the fundamental points of Christianity, beyond exception. This irritated the Jews to the highest degree; and at length, after two or three years' continuance in those parts, they found means to prevail on the governor of Damascus to have him put to death. But they knew it would be difficult to take him, as he had so many friends in the city; they therefore kept themselves in a continual watch, searched all the houses where

they supposed he might conceal himself, and also obtained a guard from the governor to observe the gates, in order to prevent his escaping from them.

In this distress his Christian friends were far from deserting him: they tried every method that offered, to procure his escape, but finding it impossible for him to pass through either of the gates of the city, they let him down from one of their houses, through a window, in a basket, over the wall, by which means the cruel designs of his enemies were rendered abortive.

Having thus escaped from his malicious persecutors, he repaired to Jerusalem, and, on his arrival, addressed himself to the church. But they, knowing well the former temper and principles of this great persecutor, shunned his company, till Barnabas brought him to Peter, who was not yet cast into prison, and to James, bishop of Jerusalem, informing them of his miraculous conversion, and that he had preached the Gospel with the greatest boldness in the synagogues of Damascus; upon which they gladly received him, and familiarly entertained him fifteen days.

During this interval, he was remarkably assiduous in preaching the Gospel of the Son of God, and confuting the Hellenist Jews with the greatest courage and resolution. But snares were laid for him, as malice can as easily cease to be, as to remain inactive. Being warned by God in a vision, that his testimony would not be received at Jerusalem, he thought proper to depart, and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Accordingly, being conducted by his brethren to Cæsarea Phillippi, he set sail for Tarsus, his native city: from whence he was soon after brought, by Barnabas, to Antioch, to assist him in propagating Christianity in that city.

In this employment he spent one whole year, and had the satisfaction of seeing the Gospel flourish in a very remarkable manner.

It was in this city that the disciples first acquired the name of *Christians*, before which they were styled Nazarenes; but this appellation soon prevailed all over the world; and the latter was in a few ages almost entirely forgotten.

The first place visited by Barnabas and Saul was Seleucia, where they did not continue long, but sailed for Cyprus; and at Salamis, a great city in that island, they preached in the synagogue of the Jews. From thence they removed to Paphos, the residence of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of the island, a man of great wisdom and prudence, but miserably seduced by the wicked artifices of "Bar-Jesus," a Jewish impostor, who styled himself Elymas, or the magician,-vehemently opposed the apostles, and kept the proconsul from embracing the faith.

The proconsul, however, called for the apostles, who after

severely checking Elymas for his malicious opposition to the truth, told him, the divine vengeance was now ready to seize upon him; and immediately he was deprived of his sight. The vengeance of the Almighty was remarkably displayed in this punishment, by depriving him of his bodily eyes, who had so wilfully and maliciously shut those of his mind against the light of the Gospel, and also endeavored to keep others in darkness and ignorance. This miracle convinced the proconsul of the truth of the doctrines taught by the apostles, and made him a convert to the faith.

St. Paul, after this remarkable success in Cyprus, repaired to Phrygia, in Pamphilia, and taking another with him, in the room of Mark, who was gone to Jerusalem, traveled to Antioch, the metropolis of Pisidia.

Soon after their arrival, they entered the synagogue of the Jews on the sabbath-day, and after the reading of the law, Paul, being invited by the rulers of the synagogue, delivered an address so powerful, that it obtained from the converted Jews a request that it should again be delivered the ensuing sabbath; when almost the whole city flocked to hear the apostle; at which the Jews were filled with envy, and contradicted Paul, uttering many blasphemous expressions against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. But their opposition could not daunt the apostles, who boldly declared, that our blessed Saviour had charged them to preach the Gospel first to the Jews, but, as they so obstinately rejected it, they were now to address themselves to the Gentiles; who hearing this, rejoiced exceedingly, magnifying the works of the Almighty, and many of them embraced the doctrines of the Gospel.

This increased the malice and fury of the Jews, who by false and artful insinuations, prevailed on some of the more bigoted and honorable women to bring over their husbands to their party, by which means Paul and Barnabas were driven out of the city. At which the apostles departed, shaking off the dust from their feet, as a testimony of the sense they had of the ingratitude and infidelity of the Jews.

From Antioch they went to Iconium, the metropolis of Lycaonia, a province of the lesser Asia, where they entered into the synagogue of the Jews, notwithstanding the ill-treatment they had met with from the Jews in other places.

Among the converts at Lystra, was a man who had been lame from his mother's womb, and never had walked. But Paul, perceiving that he had faith to be saved, thought proper to add the cure of his body to that of his soul, knowing that it would not only be beneficial to him, but to all the rest of the believers, by confirming their faith. And that the miracle might be wrought in the most conspicuous manner, he, in the midst of the

congregation, said, in an audible voice, to the man, "Stand upright on thy feet." And the words were no sooner pronounced, than his strength was at once restored, and he leaped up, and walked.

The apostles indefatigably persevered in the execution of their important commission, declaring, wherever they went, the glad tidings of salvation, through repentance unto life, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But the malice of the Jews still pursued them; for some of these bigoted Israelites coming from Antioch and Iconium, exasperated and stirred up the multitude; so that those very persons who could hardly be restrained from offering sacrifice to them, now used them like slaves, stoning them in so cruel a manner that Paul was thought to be dead; and as such they dragged him out of the city: but while the Christians of Lystra were attending on his body, probably in order to carry him to the grave, he arose, and returned with them into the city, and the next day departed with Barnabas to Derbe, where they preached the Gospel, and converted many; no danger being able to terrify them from the work of the ministry, and publishing the glad tidings of salvation in every place.

They did not, however, long continue at Derbe, but returned to Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, and Pisidia, confirming the Christians of those places in the faith, earnestly persuading them to persevere, and not to be discouraged with those troubles and persecutions, which they must expect would attend the profession of the Gospel. And that the affairs of the church might be conducted with more regularity, they ordained elders and pastors, to teach, to instruct, and to watch over them; and then left them to the protection of the Almighty, to whose care they recommended them by prayer and fasting.

After leaving Antioch, they passed through Pisidia, and came to Pamphilia; and after preaching the Gospel at Perga, they went down to Attalia.

Having thus finished the circuit of their ministry, they returned back to Antioch, in Syria, from whence they at first departed. Here they summoned the church, and gave them an account of their ministry, the success it had met in different parts, and how great a door had thus been opened for the conversion of the Gentile world.

CHAPTER III.

Transactions of this great Apostle, from the time of the Synod at Jerusalem, till his preaching at Athens.

THE controversy concerning the observation of Jewish ceremonies in the Christian church, being decided in favor of St. Paul, he and his companions returned back to Antioch; and soon after Peter himself came down. On reading the decretal epistle in the church, the converts conversed freely and inoffensively with the Gentiles, till some of the Jews coming thither from Jerusalem, Peter withdrew his conversation, as if it had been a thing unwarrantable and unlawful. By such a strange method of proceeding, the minds of many were dissatisfied, and their consciences very uneasy. St. Paul with the greatest concern observed it, and publicly rebuked Peter, with that sharpness and severity his unwarrantable practice deserved.

Soon after this dispute, Paul and Barnabas resolved to visit the churches they had planted among the Gentiles, and Barnabas was desirous of taking with them his cousin Mark; but this Paul strenuously opposed, as he had left them in their former journey. This trifling dispute arose to such a height, that these two great apostles and fellow-laborers in the Gospel parted; Barnabas taking Mark with him, repaired to Cyprus, his native country, and Paul having made choice of Silas, and recommended the success of his undertaking to the care of Divine Providence, set forward on his intended journey.

They first visited the churches of Syria and Cilicia, confirming the people in the faith, by their instructions and exhortations. Hence they sailed to Crete, where Paul preached the Gospel, and constituted Titus to be the first bishop and pastor of the island, leaving him to settle those affairs of the church, which time would not permit the apostle to settle himself. From hence Paul and Silas returned back to Cilicia, and came to Lystra, where they found Timothy, whose Father was a Greek, but his mother a Jewish convert, and by her he had been brought up under all the advantages of a pious and religious education, especially with regard to the Holy Scriptures, which he had studied with the greatest assiduity and success. This person St. Paul designed for the companion of his travels, and a special instrument in the ministry of the Gospel. But knowing that his being uncircumcised would prove a stumbling-block to the Jews, he caused him to be circumcised; being willing, in lawful and and indifferent matters, to conform himself to the tempers and apprehensions of men, in order to save their souls. In this in

stance the apostle evinced much prudence, well knowing that inveterate prejudices in religious matters are not easily overcome; for which reason he is said to become all things to all men.

Every thing being ready for their journey, St: Paul and his companions departed from Lystra, passed through Phrygia, and the country of Galatia, where the apostle was entertained with the greatest kindness and veneration, the people looking upon him as angel sent immediately from heaven; and being by revelation forbidden to go into Asia, he was commanded by a second vision to repair to Macedonia, to preach the Gospel. Accordingly our apostle prepared to pass from Asia into Europe.

Here St. Luke joined them, and became, ever after, the inseparable companion of St. Paul, who being desirous of finding the speediest passage into Macedonia, took ship with his companions, Silas, Luke, and Timothy, and came to Samothracia, an island in the Ægian Sea, not far from Thrace; and the next day he went to Neapolis, a port of Macedonia. Leaving Neapolis, they repaired to Phillippi, the metropolis of that part of Macedonia, and a Roman colony, where they staid some days.

In this city, Paul, according to his constant practice, preached in a proseucha, or oratory of the Jews, which stood by the river side, at some distance from the city, and was much frequented by the devout women of their religion, who met there to pray, and hear the law. And after several days, as they were repairing to the same place of devotion, there met them a damsel who possessed a spirit of divination, by whom her masters acquired very great advantage. This woman followed Paul and his companions, crying out, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us, the way of salvation!" Paul, at first, took no notice of her, not being willing to multiply miracles without necessity. But when he saw her following them several days together, he began to be troubled, and commanded the spirit, in the name of Jesus, to come out of her. The evil spirit, with reluctance obeyed, and left the damsel that very instant.

This miraculous cure proving a great loss to her masters, who acquired large gains from her soothsaying, they were filled with envy and malice against the apostles; and, by their instigation, the multitude arose, and seized upon Paul and his companions, hurried them before the magistrates and governors of the colony; accusing them of introducing many innovations which were prejudicial to the state, and unlawful for them to comply with, as being Romans.

The magistrates being concerned for the tranquillity of the state, and jealous of all disturbances, were very forward to punish the offenders, against whom great numbers of the multitude testified; and therefore commanded the officers to strip them, and scourge them severely, as seditious person.

This was accordingly executed; after which the apostles were committed to close custody, the gaoler receiving more than ordinary charge to keep them safely; and he accordingly thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. But the most obscure dungeon, or the pitchy mantle of the night, cannot intercept the beams of divine joy and comfort from the souls of pious men. Their minds were all serenity, and at midnight they prayed and sang praises so loud, that they were heard in every part of the prison. Nor were their prayers offered to the throne of grace in vain: an earthquake shook the foundations of the prison, opened the doors, loosed the chains, and set the prisoners at liberty.

This convulsion of nature roused the gaoler from his sleep; and concluding from what he saw, that all his prisoners were escaped, he was going to put a period to his life; but Paul observing him, hastily cried, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here." The keeper was now as greatly surprised at the goodness of the apostles, as he was before terrified at the thoughts of their escape: and calling for a light, he came immediately into the presence of the apostles, fell down at their feet, and took them from the dungeon, brought them to his own house, washed their stripes, and begged of them to instruct him in the knowledge of that God, who was so mighty to save.

St. Paul readily granted his request, and replied, That, if he believed in Jesus Christ, he might be saved with his whole house; accordingly, the gaoler, with all his family, were, after a competent instruction, baptized, and received as members of the church of Christ.

As soon as it was day, the magistrates either hearing what had happened, or reflecting on what they had done as too harsh and unjustifiable, sent their sergeant to the gaoler, with orders to discharge the apostles. The gaoler joyfully delivered the message, and bid them "depart in peace;" but Paul, that he might make the magistrates sensible what injury they had done them, and how unjustly they had punished them, without examination or trial, sent them word, that, as they thought proper to scourge and imprison Romans, contrary to the laws of the empire, he expected they should come themselves and make them some satisfaction.

The magistrates were terrified at this message; well knowing how dangerous it was to provoke the formidable power of the Romans, who never suffered any freeman to be beaten uncondemned; they came therefore to the prison, and very submissively entreated the apostles to depart without any further disturbance.

This small recompense for the cruel usage they had received was accepted by the meek followers of the blessed Jesus; they

left the prison, and retired to the house of Lydia, where they comforted their brethren with an account of their deliverance, and departed; having laid the foundation of a very eminent church, as it appears from St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians. Leaving Philippi, Paul and his companions continued their journey towards the west, till they came to Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia, about a hundred and twenty miles from Philippi. On their arrival at Thessalonica, Paul according to his custom, went into the synagogue of the Jews, and preached unto his countrymen. His doctrine, however, was strenuously opposed by the Jews, who would not allow Jesus to be the Messiah, because of his ignominious death.

During the stay of the apostles at Thessalonica, they lodged in the house of a certain Christian, named Jason, who entertained them very courteously. But the Jews would not suffer the apostles to continue at rest. They refused to embrace the Gospel themselves, and therefore envied its success, and determined to oppose its progress. Accordingly, they gathered together a great number of lewd and wicked wretches, who beset the house of Jason, intending to take Paul, and deliver him up to an incensed multitude. But in this they were disappointed; Paul and Silas being removed from thence by the Christians, and concealed in some other part of the city and finally sent away by night to Beræa, a city about fifty miles south of Thessalonica, but out of the power of their enemies. Here also Paul's great love for his countrymen, the Jews, and his earnest desire of their salvation, excited him to preach to them in particular; accordingly, he entered into their synagogue, and explained the Gospel unto them, proving, out of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the truth of the doctrines he advanced. These Jews were of a more ingenuous and candid temper than those of Thessalonica; and as they heard him with great reverence and attention, expound and apply the Scriptures, so they searched diligently, whether his proofs were proper and pertinent, and consonant to the sense of the texts he referred to: and having found every thing to be agreeable to what Paul had advanced, many of them believed; and several Gentiles, following their example, became obedient to the faith, among whom were several women of quality. The news of this remarkable success was carried to Thessalonica, and greatly incensed the inveterate enemies of the Gospel there, who accordingly repaired to Beræa, and raised tumults against the apostle: so that Paul, to avoid their fury, was forced to leave the town; but Silas and Timothy, either less known or less envied, continued still there.

Paul leaving Beræa, under the conduct of certain guides, it was said he designed to retire by sea out of Greece, that his restless enemies might cease their persecution; but the guides,

according to Paul's order, brought him to Athens, and left him there after receiving from him an order for Silas and Timotheus to repair to him as soon as possible.

While St. Paul continued at Athens, expecting the arrival of Silas and Timothy, he walked up and down, to take a more accurate survey of the city, which he found miserably overrun with superstition and idolatry.

Their superstitious practices grieved the spirit of the apostle; accordingly, he exerted all his strength for their conversion; he disputed on the sabbath-days in the synagogues of the Jews, and at other times took all opportunities of preaching to the Athenians the coming of the Messiah to save the world.

This doctrine was equally new and strange to the Athenians, and though they did not persecute him as the Jews did, yet his preaching Jesus was considered by the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers as a fabulous legend, and by the more sober part as a discovery of some new gods, which they had not yet placed in their temples: and though they were not unwilling to recieve any new deities, yet as the Areopagus, the supreme court of the city, was to judge of all gods, to whom public worship might be allowed, they brought him before those judges, to give an account of his doctrine.

Paul being placed before the judges of this high assembly, readily gave them an account of his doctrine, in a grave and elegant speech; wherein he did not tell them they were horrible and gross idolaters, lest he should offend them, and thereby prevent them from listening to his reasons: but, having commended them for their religious dispositions, he took occasion, from the altar inscribed to the "unknown God," to make a proper defence of his doctrine. "I endeavor," said he, "only to explain that altar to you, and manifest the nature of that God whom ye ignorantly worship. The true God is he that made the world, and all things therein; and who being Lord of all, dwells not in temples made with hands, nor is to be worshipped in lifeless idols. As he is the Creator of all things, he cannot be confined to the workmanship of man, whether temples or statues; nor stand in need of sacrifices, since he is the fountain of life to all things. He made from one common original, the whole race of mankind, and hath wisely determined their dependance on him, that they might be oblige to seek after him and serve him. A truth perceivable in the darkest state of ignorance, and acknowledged by one of your own poets. If this be the nature of God, it is surely the highest absurdity to represent him by an image or similitude. The divine patience hath been too much exercised already with such gross abuses in religion, but now expects a thorough reformation, having sent his son Jesus Christ to make

him known to the world, and at the same time to inform them that he hath appointed a day of general judgment, when the religion of mankind shall be tried by the test of the Gospel, before his only begotten Son, who is appointed sole judge of the quick and dead, and whose commission to that high office hath been ratified by the Almighty, in raising him from the dead."

On his mentioning the resurrection, some of the philosophers mocked and derided him; others, more modest, but not satisfied with the proofs he had given, gravely answered, "We would hear thee again of this matter." After which Paul departed from the court; but not without some success: for a few of his auditors believed and attended his instructions.

Thus boldly did this intrepid servant and soldier of Jesus Christ assert the cause of his divine Master, among the great, the wise, and the learned, and reason with great persuasion and eloquence on the nature of God, and the manner in which he has commanded his creatures to worship him, even in spirit and in truth.

CHAPTER IV.

Success of St. Paul's Ministry at Corinth and Ephesus.

During St. Paul's stay at Athens, Timothy, according to the order he had received, came to him, out of Macedonia, and brought an account that the Christians at Thessalonica were under persecution from their fellow citizens, ever since his departure: at which St. Paul was greatly concerned, and at first inclined to visit them in person, to confirm them in the faith they had embraced; but being hindered by the enemies of the Gospel, he sent Timothy to comfort them, and put them in mind of what they had at first heard, namely, that persecution would be the constant attendant on their profession.

On Timothy's departure, St. Paul left Athens, and traveled to Corinth, a very populous place, and famous for its trade.

After some stay at Corinth, the apostle was joined by Silas and Timothy, and disputed frequently in the synagogue, reasoning and proving, that Jesus was the true Messiah.

During his stay at Corinth, he wrote his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, to supply his absence. In this epistle he again endeavors to confirm their minds in the truth of the Gospel, and prevent their being shaken with those troubles which the wicked and unbelieving Jews would be continually raising against them.

St. Paul, on his leaving the church at Corinth, took ship at Cenchrea, the port of Corinth, for Syria, taking with him Aquila and Priscilla; and on his arrival at Ephesus, he preached awhile in the synagogue of the Jews, promising to return to them, after keeping the passover at Jerusalem. Accordingly, he again took ship, and landed at Cæsarea, and from thence traveled to Jerusalem, where he kept the feast, visited the church, and then repaired to Antioch. Here he staid some time, and then traversed the countries of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming the newly converted Christians, till he came to Ephesus, where he fixed his abode for three years, bringing with him Gaius of Derbe, Aristarchus, a native of Thessalonica, Timotheus and Erastus of Corinth, and Titus. The first thing he did after his arrival, was to examine certain disciples, "Whether they had received the Holy Ghost since they believed?" To which they answered, "that the doctrine they had received promised nothing of that nature, nor had they ever heard that such an extraordinary spirit had of late been bestowed upon the church."

This answer surprised the apostle, who asked them, in what name they had been baptized; since in the Christian form, the name of the Holy Ghost was always expressed? They replied that they had only received John's baptism; upon which the apostle informed them, that though John's baptism commanded nothing but repentance, yet it tacitly implied the whole doctrine of Christ and the Holy Ghost. When they heard this, they were baptized according to the form prescribed by Christ himself, that is, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and after the apostle had prayed, and laid his hands upon them, they received the gifts of tongues, and other miraculous powers.

After this, he entered into the Jewish synagogues, where, for the first three months, he contended and disputed with the Jews, endeavoring, with great earnestness and resolution, to convince them of the truth of the Christian religion. But when, instead of success, he met with nothing but obstinacy and infidelity, he left the synagogue, and taking those with him whom he had converted, instructed them and others who resorted to him, in the school of one Tyrannus, a place where scholars used to be instructed. In this manner he continued to preach the Gospel two whole years; by which means the Jews and proselytes had an opportunity of hearing the glad tidings of salvation; and because miracles are the clearest evidence of a divine commission, the Almighty was pleased to testify the doctrine which St. Paul delivered by amazing and miraculous operations, many of which were of a peculiar and extraordinary nature; for he not only healed those who came to him, but if napkins or handkerchiefs

were only touched by him, and applied to the sick, their diseases immediately vanished, and the evil spirits departed out of those that were possessed by them.

About this time the apostle wrote his epistle to the Galatians; for he had heard that, since his departure, corrupt opinions had crept in among them, with regard to the necessity of observing the legal rites.

CHAPTER V.

Transactions of St. Paul, during the farther progress of his Ministry, to the time of his arraignment before Felix.

Soon after the great tumult at Ephesus, about the goddess Diana, Paul called the Christians together, and took his leave of them with the utmost tender expressions of love and affection. He had now spent almost three years at Ephesus, and founded there a very considerable church, of which he had ordained Timothy the first bishop. He first traveled about two hundred miles northward, to Troas, before he took ship, expecting to meet Titus there. But missing him, he proceeded on his voyage to Macedonia.

On his arrival there, he preached the Gospel in several places, even as far as Illyricum, now called Sclavonia. During this journey he met with many troubles and dangers, "without were fightings, and within were fears;" but God who comforteth those that are cast down, revived his spirits by the arrival of Titus, who gave him a pleasing account of the good effects his epistle had produced at Corinth.

During the stay of Titus in Macedonia, Paul wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, and sent it to them by Titus and Luke.

About this time also he wrote his first epistle to Timothy, whom he left at Ephesus.

During his stay in Greece, he went to Corinth, where he wrote his famous epistle to the Romans, which he sent by Phœbe, a deaconess of the church of Cenchrea, near Corinth. His principal intention in this epistle is, fully to state and determine the great controversy between the Jews and Gentiles, with regard to the obligations of the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law, and those principal and material points of doctrine depending upon it, namely, Christian liberty, the use of indifferent things, and the like. And, which is the chief intention of all religion, instructs them, and presses them to perform the

duties of a holy and pious life, such as the Christian doctrine naturally recommends.

St. Paul being now determined to return into Syria, in order to convey the contributions to the brethren at Jerusalem, set out on his journey; but being informed that the Jews had formed a design of killing and robbing him by the way, he returned back into Macedonia, and came to Phillippi, from whence he went to Troas, where he staid seven days. Here he preached to them on the Lord's day, and continued his discourse till midnight, being himself to depart in the morning.

How indefatigable was the industry of this great apostle! How closely did he tread in the steps of his great Master, who "went about doing good!" He preached, and wrought miracles wherever he came. As a master builder, he either laid a foundation, or raised the superstructure. He was "instant in season, and out of season," and spared no pains to assist the souls of men.

The night being thus spent in holy exercises, St. Paul took his leave of the brethren in the morning, traveling on foot to Assos, a sea-port town, whither he had before sent his companions by sea. From thence they sailed to Mytilene, a city in the Isle of Lesbos. They next sailed from thence, and came over against Chios, and the day following landed at Trogyllium, a promontory of Ionia, near Samos. The next day they came to Miletus, not putting in at Ephesus, because the apostle was resolved, if possible, to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

On his arrival at Miletus, he sent to Ephesus, to summon the elders of the church; and, on their coming, reminded them of the manner in which he had conversed among them, how faithfully and affectionately he had discharged the offices of his ministry, and how incessantly he had labored for the good of the souls of men: adding, that he had never failed to acquaint them, both in public and private, with whatever might be useful and profitable to them, urging both the Jews and Gentiles to repentance, and reformation of life, and a hearty perseverance in the faith of Christ: that he was now going up to Jerusalem, where he was ignorant of what might befall him, except what had been foretold him by those who were endued with the prophetical gifts of the Holy Ghost; namely that afflictions and imprisonment would attend him; but that this gave him no concern, being willing to lay down his life whenever the Gospel required it, and fully determined to serve faithfully his great Lord and Master.

St. Paul having finished his discourse, he kneeled down, and joined with them in prayer; and they all melted into tears, and, with the greatest expressions of sorrow, attended him to the ship;

grieving in the most passionate manner for what he had told them, "That they should see his face no more."

Paul, with his companions, now departed from Miletus, and arrived at Coos, from whence they sailed the next day to Rhodes, a large island in the Ægean sea. Leaving this place, they came to Patara, the metropolis of Lycia, where they went on board another vessel bound for Tyre, in Phœnicia. On his arrival, he visited the brethren there, and continued with them a week, and was advised by some of them, who had the gift of prophecy, not to go up to Jerusalem. But the apostle would by no means abandon his design, or refuse to suffer any thing, provided he might spread the Gospel of his Saviour. Finding all persuasions were in vain, they jointly accompanied him to the shore, where he kneeled down, and prayed with them; and after embracing them with the utmost affection, he went on board, and came to Ptolemais, and the next day to Cæsarea.

During their stay in this place, Agabus, a Christian prophet, came thither from Judea, who, taking Paul's girdle, bound his own hands and feet with it, signifying, by this symbol, that the Jews would bind Paul in that manner, and deliver him over to the Gentiles. Whereupon both his own companions, and the Christians of Cæsarea earnestly besought him that he would not go up to Jerusalem. But the apostle asked them, if they intended by these passionate dissuasives to add more affliction to his sorrow. "For I am ready," continued he, "not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus."

When the disciples found that his resolution was not to be shaken, they importuned him no further, leaving the event to be determined according to the pleasure of the Most High. And all things being ready, Paul and his companions set forward on their journey, and were kindly and joyfully received by the Christians on their arrival at Jerusalem.

CHAPTER VI.

The Transactions of St. Paul, from his first Trial before Felix, till his coming to Rome.

Our apostle soon after his arrival, encountered Tertullus, who, in a short, but eloquent speech, began to accuse him, charging him with sedition, heresy, and the profanation of the temple.

The orator having finished his charge against the apostle, Felix told St. Paul that he was now at liberty to make his defence, which he did in the following manner:

"I answer this charge of the Jews with the greatest satisfaction before thee, because thou hast for many years been a judge of this nation. About twelve days since, I repaired to Jerusalem, to worship the God of Jacob. But I neither disputed with any man, or endeavored to stir the people in the synagogues or the city. Nor can they prove the charge they have brought against me.

"This, however, I readily confess, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, and according to this faith, I am careful to maintain a clear and quiet conscience, both towards God and man.

"After I had spent some years in distant countries, I repaired to Jerusalem, with the alms I had collected in other provinces, for the poor of mine own nation, an offering to the God of Jacob. And while I was performing the duties of religion, certain Asiatic Jews found me in the temple, purified according to the law; but neither attended with a multitude of followers, or the least tumultuous assembly. It was therefore necessary that these Jews should have been here, if they had any thing to allege against me. Nay, I appeal to those of the Sanhedrim here present, if any thing has been laid to my charge, except the objections of the Sadducees, who violently opposed me for asserting the doctrine of the resurrection."

Felix having thus heard both parties, refused to pass any final sentence, till he had more fully advised about it, and consulted Lysias, the governor of the castle, who was the most proper person to give an accou t of the sedition and tumult; commanding, in the mean time, that St. Paul should be kept under a guard, but at the same time enjoy the liberty of being visited by his friends, and receiving from them any office of friendship.

Some time after St. Paul had appealed unto Cæsar, king Agrippa, who succeeded Herod in the Tetrarchate of Galilee, and his sister Bernice, came to Cæsarea to visit the new governor. Festus embraced this opportunity of mentioning the case of our apostle to king Agrippa, together with the remarkable tumult this affair had occasioned among the Jews, and the appeal he had made to Cæsar. This account excited the curiosity of king Agrippa, and he was desirous of hearing himself what St. Paul had to say in his own vindication.

Accordingly, the next day, the king and his sister, accompanied with Festus the governor, and several other persons of distinction came into the court with a pompous and splendid retinue, where the prisoner was brought before them. On his appearing,

Festus informed the court, how greatly he had been importuned by the Jews, both at Cæsarea and Jerusalem, to put the prisoner to death as a malefactor; but having, on examination, found him guilty of no capital crime, and the prisoner himself having appealed unto Cæsar, he was determined to send him to Rome; but was willing to have his cause debated before Agrippa, that he might be furnished with some material particulars to send with him; it being highly absurd to send a prisoner without signifying the crimes alleged against him.

Festus having finished his speech, Agrippa told Paul, he was now at liberty to make his own defence: and silence being made, he delivered himself in the following manner, addressing his speech particularly to Agrippa:

"I consider it as a particular happiness, king Agrippa, that I am to make my defence against the accusations of the Jews before thee: because thou art well acquainted with all their customs, and the questions commonly debated among them: I therefore beseech thee to hear me patiently. All the Jews are well acquainted with my manner of life, from my youth, the greatest part of it having been spent with my own countrymen at Jerusalem. They also know that I was educated under the institutions of the Pharisees, the strictest sect of our religion, and am now arraigned for a tenet believed by all their fathers; a tenet sufficiently credible in itself, and plainly revealed in the Scriptures, I mean, the resurrection of the dead. Why should any mortal think it either incredible or impossible, that God should raise the dead?

"I, indeed, formerly thought myself indispensably obliged to oppose the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. Nor was I satisfied with imprisoning and punishing with death itself the saints I found at Jerusalem; I even persecuted them in strange cities, whither my implacable zeal pursued them, having procured authority for that purpose from the chief priests and elders.

"Accordingly I departed for Damascus, with a commission from the Sanhedrim: but as I was traveling towards that city, I saw at mid-day, O king, a light from heaven, far exceeding the brightness of the sun, encompassing me and my companions. On seeing this awful appearance, we all fell to the earth, and I heard a voice which said to me, in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.' To which I answered, 'Who art thou, Lord?' and he replied, 'I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.' But be not terrified, arise from the earth: for I have appeared unto thee, that thou mightest be both a witness of the things thou hast seen, and also of others which I will hereafter reveal unto thee. My power shall deliver thee from the Jews and Gentiles, to whom now I send thee to preach the Gospel; to

withdraw the veil of darkness and ignorance; to turn them from falsehood unto truth, "and from the power of Satan unto God."

"Accordingly, king Agrippa, I readily obeyed the heavenly vision: I preached the Gospel first to the inhabitants of Damascus, then to those of Jerusalem and Judea, and afterwards to the Gentiles; persuading them to forsake their iniquities, and, by sincere repentance, turn to the living God.

"These endeavors to save the souls of sinful mortals exasperated the Jews, who caught me in the temple, and entered into a conspiracy to destroy me. But by the help of Omnipotence, I still remain a witness to all the human race, preaching nothing but what Moses and all the prophets foretold, namely, That the Messiah should suffer, be the first that should rise from the chambers of the grave, and publish the glad tidings of salvation, both to the Jews and Gentiles."

While the apostle thus pleaded for himself, Festus cried out, "Paul, thou art mad; too much study hath deprived thee of thy reason." But Paul answered, "I am far, most noble Festus, from being transported with idle and distracted ideas; the words I speak are dictated by truth and sobriety; and I am persuaded that the king Agrippa himself is not ignorant of these things; for they were transacted openly before the world. I am confident, king Agrippa, that thou believest the prophets, and therefore must know all their predictions were fulfilled in Christ." To which Agrippa answered, "Thou hast almost persuaded me to embrace the Christian faith." Paul replied, "I sincerely wish that not only thou, but also all that hear me, were not almost, but altogether, the same as I myself, except being prisoners."

It being now finally determined, that Paul should be sent to Rome, he was, with several other prisoners of consequence committed to the care of Julius, commander of a company belonging to the legion of Augustus; and was accompanied in his voyage by St. Luke, Aristarchus, Trophimus, and some others not mentioned by the sacred historian.

In the month of September, they embarked on board a ship of Adramyttium, and sailed to Sidon, where the centurion courteously gave the apostle leave to go on shore to visit his friends and refresh himself.

After a short stay they sailed for Cyprus, and arrived opposite the Fair-Havens, a place near Myra, a city of Lycia. Here the season being far advanced, and Paul foreseeing it would be a dangerous voyage, persuaded them to put in and winter there. But the Roman centurion preferring the opinion of the master of the ship, and the harbor being at the same time incommodious, resolved, if possible, to reach Phœnice, a port

of Crete, and winter there. But they soon found themselves disappointed; for the fine southerly gale which had favored them for some time, suddenly changed into a stormy and tempestuous wind at north-east, which blew with such violence, that the ship was obliged to sail before it; and to prevent her sinking, they threw overboard the principal part of her lading.

In this desperate and uncomfortable condition they continued fourteen days, and on the fourteenth night the mariners discovered they were near some coast, and, therefore, to avoid the rocks, thought proper to come to an anchor, till the morning might give them better information.

During the time they continued at anchor, waiting for the light of the morning, St. Paul prevailed upon them to eat and refresh themselves, having fasted a long time, assuring them they should all escape.

The country near which they were, was, as Paul had foretold, an island called Melita, now Malta, situated in the Lybian Sea, between Syracuse and Africa. Here they landed, and met with great civility from the people, who treated them with humanity, and entertained them with every necessary accommodation. But whilst St. Paul was laying a few sticks on the fire a viper, enlivened by the heat, came from among the wood, and fastened on his hand. On seeing this, the inhabitants of the island concluded, that he was certainly some notorious murderer, whom the divine vengeance, though it suffered him to escape the sea, had reserved for a more public and solemn execution. But when they saw him shake off the venomous creature into the fire, and no manner of harm ensue, they changed their sentiments, and cried out, "that he was a God."

After three months stay in this island, the centurion with his charge went on board the Castor and Pollux, a ship of Alexandria, bound to Italy. They put in at Syracuse, where they tarried three days; then they sailed to Regium, and from thence to Puteoli, where they landed; and finding some Christians there, staid, at their request, a week with them, and then set forward on their journey to Rome. The Christians of this city, hearing of the apostle's coming, went to meet him as far as the distance of about thirty miles from Rome, and others as far as the Apii-forum, fifty-one miles distant from the capital. They kindly embraced each other, and the liberty he saw the Christians enjoy at Rome greatly tended to enliven the spirits of the apostle.

CHAPTER VII.

The transactions of St. Paul, from his arrival at Rome, till his Martyrdom.

Having refreshed himself after the fatigue of his voyage, the apostle sent for the heads of the Jewish consistory at Rome, and related to them the cause of his coming, in the following manner: "Though I have been guilty of no violence of the laws of our religion, yet I was delivered by the Jews at Jerusalem to the Roman governors, who more than once would have acquitted me as innocent of any capital offence: but, by the perverseness of my persecutors, I was obliged to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had any thing to accuse my nation of: I had recourse to this method merely to clear my own innocence."

Having thus removed a popular prejudice, he added, "That the true cause of his sufferings was that their own religion had taught him, 'the belief and expectation of a future resurrection.'" But his discourse had different effects on different hearers, some being convinced, and others persisting in their infidelity.

For two whole years Paul dwelt at Rome, in a house he had hired for his own use; wherein he assiduously employed himself in preaching and writing for the good of the church.

The Christians of Philippi hearing of St. Paul's being at Rome, and not knowing what distress he might be reduced to, raised a contribution for him, and sent it by Epaphroditus, their bishop, by whom he returned an epistle to them, wherein he gives some account of the state of his affairs at Rome.

St. Paul lived about three years at Ephesus, preaching the Gospel to the numerous inhabitants of that city, and was therefore well acquainted with the state and condition of the place: so that taking the opportunity of Tychicus's going thither, he wrote his epistle to the Ephesians, wherein he endeavors to countermine the principles and practices both of the Jews and Gentiles, to confirm them in the belief and practices of the Christian doctrine, and to instruct them fully in the great mysteries of the Gospel.

By what means St. Paul was discharged from the accusation the Jews brought against him, we have no account in history: but it is natural to suppose, that not having sufficient proof of what they alleged, or being informed that the crimes they accused him of, were no violation of the Roman laws, they durst not implead him before the emperor, and so permitted him to be dis-

charged of course. But by whatever means; he procured his liberty, he wrote his epistle to the Hebrews before he left Italy, from whence he dates his salutations.

The principal design of it is to magnify Christ, and the religion of the Gospel, above Moses and the Jewish economy, in order to establish and confirm the converted Jews in the firm belief and profession of Christianity, notwithstanding the trouble and persecutions that would certainly attend them.

Having thus discharged his ministry, both by preaching and writing, in Italy, St. Paul, accompanied by Timothy, prosecuted his long-intended journey into Spain; and, according to the testimony of several writers, crossed the sea and preached the Gospel in Britain.

What success he had in these western parts is not known: he however, continued there eight or nine months, and then returned again to the east, visited Sicily, Greece, and Crete, and then repaired to Rome.

Here he met with Peter, and was together with him, thrown into prison, doubtless in the general persecution raised against the Christians, under pretence that they had set fire to the city. How long he remained in prison is uncertain; nor do we know whether he was scourged before his execution. He was, however, allowed the privilege of a Roman citizen, and therefore beheaded.

Being come to the place of execution, which was the Aquæ Salviæ, three miles from Rome, he cheerfully, after a solemn preparation, gave his neck to the fatal stroke; and from this vale of misery passed to the blissful regions of immortality, to the kingdom of his beloved Master, the great Redeemer of the human race.

He was buried in the Via Ostiensis, about two miles from Rome; and about the year 317, Constantine the Great, at the instance of Pope Sylvester, built a stately church over his grave, adorned it with an hundred marble columns, and beautified it with the most exquisite workmanship.

ST. ANDREW.

CHAPTER I.

The transactions of St. Andrew, from his Birth to his being called to the Apostleship.

This apostle was born at Bethsaida, a city of Galilee, built on the banks of the Lake of Genesareth, and was son to John, or Jonas, a fisherman of that town. He was brother to Simon Peter, but whether older or younger is not certainly known, though the generality of the ancients intimate that he was the younger. He was brought up to his father's trade, at which he labored till our blessed Saviour called him to be a fisher of men, for which he was, by some preparatory instructions, qualified even before the appearance of the Messiah.

John the Baptist had lately preached the doctrine of repentance, and was, by the generality of the Jews, from the impartiality of his precepts, and the remarkable strictness and austerity of his life, held in great veneration.

In the number of his followers was our apostle, who accompanied him beyond Jordan, when the Messiah, who had some time before been baptized, came that way. Upon his approach, the Baptist pointed him out as the Messiah, styling him the Lamb of God, the true sacrifice that was to expiate the sins of the world. As soon as the Baptist had given this character of Jesus, Andrew, and another disciple, probably St. John, followed the Saviour of mankind to the place of his abode.

After some conversation with him, Andrew departed, and having found his brother Simon, informed him that he had discovered the great Messiah, so long expected by the house of Jacob, and accordingly brought him to Jesus. They did not, however, stay long with their Master, but returned to their calling.

Something more than a year after, Jesus, passing through Galilee, found Andrew and Peter fishing on the sea of Galilee, where he fully satisfied them of the greatness and divinity of his person, by a miraculous draught of fishes, which they took at his command. He now told them that they should enter on a different series of labors, and instead of fish, should, by the efficacy and influence of their doctrine upon the heart and conscience, catch men; commanding them to follow him, as his immediate disciples and attendants; and accordingly they left all and followed him.

CHAPTER II.

The Transactions of St. Andrew, from our blessed Saviour's Ascension, till his Martyrdom.

After the ascension of the blessed Jesus into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost on the apostles, to qualify them for their great undertaking, St. Andrew, according to the generality of ancient writers, was chosen to preach the Gospel in Scythia, and the neighboring countries.

Accordingly he departed from Jerusalem, and first traveled through Cappadocia, Galatia, and Bythinia, instructing the inhabitants in the faith of Christ, and continued his journey along the Euxine Sea, into the deserts of Scythia. An ancient author tells us, that he first came to Amynsus, where, being entertained by a Jew, he went into the synagogue, preached to them concerning Jesus, and from the prophecies of the Old Testament proved him to be the Messiah, and Saviour of the world. Having converted many here, he settled the times of their public meetings, and ordained them priests.

He went next to Trapezium, a maritime city on the Euxine sea; from whence, after visiting many other places, he came to Nice, where he stayed two years, preaching and working miracles with great success. After leaving Nice, he passed to Nicodemia, and from thence to Chalcedon, whence he sailed through the Propontis, came by the Euxine sea to Heraclea, and afterwards to Amastris. In all these places he met with the greatest difficulties, but overcame them by an invincible patience and resolution.

He next came to Synope, a city situated on the same sea, and famous both for the birth and burial of king Mithridates; here he met with his brother Peter, and stayed with him a considerable time. The inhabitants of Synope were mostly Jews, who partly from a zeal for their religion, and partly from their barbarous manners, were exasperated against St. Andrew, and entered into a confederacy to burn the house in which he lodged. But being disappointed in their design, they treated him with the most savage cruelty, throwing him on the ground, stamping upon him with their feet, pulling and dragging him from place to place; some beating him with clubs, some pelting him with stones, and others, to satisfy their brutal revenge, biting off his flesh with their teeth; till apprehending they had entirely deprived him of life, they cast him out into the fields. But he miraculously recovered, and returned publicly into the city by which

and other miracles he wrought among them, he converted many from the error of their ways, and induced them to become disciples of the blessed Jesus.

Departing from Synope, he returned to Jerusalem; but he did not continue long in that neighborhood. He returned again to the province alloted him for the exercise of his ministry, which greatly flourished through the power of the divine grace that attended it.

He traveled over Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Achaia, and Epirus, preaching the Gospel, propagating Christianity, and then confirming the doctrine he taught with signs and miracles. At last he came to Petrea, a city of Achaia, where he gave his last and greatest testimony to the Gospel of his divine Master, sealing it with his blood.

Ægenas, proconsul of Achaia, came at this time to Petrea, where, observing that multitudes had abandoned the heathen religion, and embraced the Gospel of Christ, he had recourse to every method, both of favor and cruelty, to reduce the people to their old idolatry. The apostle, whom no difficulties or dangers could deter from performing the duties of his ministry, addressed himself to the proconsul, calmly putting him in mind that, being only a judge of men, he ought to revere him who was the supreme and impartial judge of all, pay him the divine honors due to his exalted majesty, and abandon the impieties of his idolatrous worship; observed to him, that if he would renounce his idolatries, and heartily embrace the Christian faith, he should, with him and the numbers who had believed in the Son of God, receive eternal happiness in the Messiah's kingdom. The proconsul answered, that he himself should never embrace the religion he mentioned; and that the only reason why he was so earnest with him to sacrifice to the gods was, that those whom he had every where seduced might, by his example, be brought back to the ancient religion they had forsaken. The apostle replied, that he saw it was in vain to endeavor to persuade a person incapable of sober counsels, and hardened in his own blindness and folly; that with regard to himself, he might act as he pleased, and if he had, any torment greater than another, he might heap that upon him; as the greatest constancy he showed in his sufferings for Christ, the more acceptable he should be to his Lord and Master. Ægenas could hold no longer; and after treating him with very opprobrious language, and showing him the most distinguished marks of contempt, he passed sentence on him that he should be put to death.

He first ordered the apostle to be scourged, and seven lictors successively whipped his naked body: but seeing his invincible patience and constancy, he commanded him to be crucified; but

to be fastened to the cross with cords instead of nails, that his death might be more lingering and tedious.

As he was led to the place of execution, walking with a cheerful and composed mind, the people cried out, that a good and innocent man was unjustly condemned to die. On his coming near the cross, he saluted it in the following manner: "I have long desired and expected this happy hour. The cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it, and adorned with his members as with so many inestimable jewels. I therefore come joyfully and triumphing to it, that it may receive me as a disciple and follower of him, who once hung upon it, and be the means of carrying me safe to my Master, being the instrument on which he redeemed me."

After offering up his prayer to the throne of grace, and exhorting the people to constancy and perseverance in the faith he had delivered to them, he was fastened to the cross, on which he hung two whole days, teaching and instructing the people in the best manner his wretched situation would admit, being sometimes so weak and faint as scarce to have the power of utterance.

In the mean time great interest was made to the proconsul to spare his life: but the apostle earnestly begged of the Almighty that he might now depart, and seal the truth of his religion with his blood. His prayers were heard, and he expired on the last day of November, but in what year is uncertain.

There seems to have been something peculiar in the form of the cross on which he suffered. It was commonly thought to have been a cross decussate, or two pieces of timber crossing each other in the centre, in the form of the letter X, and hence usually known by the name of St. Andrew's cross.

His body being taking down from the cross, was decently and honorably interred by Maximillia, a lady of great quality and estate, and whom Nicephorus tells us, was wife to the proconsul.

Constantine the Great afterwards removed his body to Constantinople, and buried it in the great church he had built to the honor of the apostles; but this structure being taken down some hundred years after, in order to rebuild it, by Justinian the emperor, the body of St. Andrew was found in a wooden coffin, and again deposited in its proper place.

ST. JAMES THE GREAT

CHAPTER I.

The Transactions of St. James the Great, from his Birth, to the Ascension of the Son of God.

This apostle (who was surnamed the Great, by way of distinction, from another of that name) was the son of Zebedee, and by trade a fisherman, to which he applied himself with remarkable assiduity, and was exercising his employment, when the Saviour of the world passing by the sea of Galilee, saw him with his brother in the ship, and called them both to be his disciples. Nor was the call in vain; they cheerfully complied with it, and immediately left all to follow him; readily delivering themselves up to perform whatever service he should appoint them.

Soon after this he was called from the station of an ordinary disciple to the apostolic office, and even honored with some particular favors beyond most of the apostles, being one of the three whom our Lord made choice of as his companions in the more intimate transactions of his life, from which the rest were excluded. Thus, with Peter, and his brother John, he attended his Master when he raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead; he was admitted to Christ's glorious transfiguration on the mount; and when the holy Jesus was to undergo his bitter agonies in the garden, as preparatory sufferings to his passion, James was one of the three taken to be a spectator of them. Nor was it the least instance of that particular honor our Lord conferred on these apostles, that at his calling them to the apostleship, he gave them a new name and title. Simon he called Peter, or a rock; and James and John, who were brothers, Boanerges, or the sons of thunder.

Some think that this name was given them on account of their loud and bold preaching of the Gospel to the world, fearing no threatenings, despising all opposition, and going on thundering in the ears of a drowsy and sleepy world; rousing and awakening the consciences of men with the earnestness and vehemence of their preaching, which resembled thunder, as the voice of God powerfully shakes the natural world, and breaks in pieces the cedar of Lebanon. Others think it relates to the doctrine they delivered, teaching the great mysteries and promul-

gating the Gospel in a more profound and lofty strain than the rest.

But however this be, our blessed Saviour, doubtless, alluded by this term to the furious and resolute disposition of these two brothers, who seem to have been of a more fiery temper than the rest of the apostles, of which we have this memorable instance. When our Lord was determined on his journey to Jerusalem, he sent some of his disciples before him to make preparations for his coming; but, on their entering a village of Samaria, they were rudely rejected, from the old grudge that subsisted between the Samaritans and Jews, and because the Saviour, by going up to Jerusalem, seemed to slight their place of worship on Mount Gerizim. This piece of rudeness and inhumanity was so highly resented by St. James and his brother, that they came to Jesus, desiring to know if he would not imitate Elias, by calling fire down from heaven to consume this barbarous unhospitable people? Thus we find the best of men are but men, and that corrupt nature will sometimes appear even in renewed minds. But the holy Jesus soon convinced them of their mistake, by telling them, that instead of destroying, he was come to save the lives of the children of men.

CHAPTER II.

The Transactions of St. James, from the Messiah's Ascension, his sealing the truth of the Gospel with his blood.

Sophronius tells us, that after the ascension of the blessed Jesus, this apostle preached to the dispersed Jews: that is, to those converts who dispersed after the death of Stephen. The Spanish writers will have it, that after preaching the Gospel in several parts of Judea and Samaria, he visited Spain, where he planted Christianity, and appointed some select disciples to perfect what he had begun: but if we consider the shortness of St. James' life, and that the apostles continued in a body at Jerusalem, even after the dispersion of the other Christians, we shall find it difficult to allow time sufficient for so tedious and difficult a voyage as that was in those early ages; and therefore it is safest to confine his ministry to Judea and the adjacent countries.

Herod, who was a bigot to the Jewish religion, as well as desirous of acquiring the favor of the Jews, began a violent perse-

cution of the Christians, and his zeal animated him to pass sentence of death on St. James immediately. As he was led to the place of execution, the officer that guarded him to the tribunal, or rather his accuser, having been converted by that remarkable courage and constancy shown by the apostle at the time of his trial, repented of what he had done, came and fell down at the apostle's feet, and heartily begged pardon for what he had said against him. The holy man, after recovering from the surprise, tenderly embraced him. "Peace," said he, "my son, peace be unto thee, and pardon of thy faults." Upon which the officer publicly declared himself a Christian, and both were beheaded at the same time. Thus fell the great apostle St. James, taking cheerfully that cup of which he had long since told his Lord, he was ready to drink.

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST

CHAPTER I.

The Transactions of St. John, from his Birth to the Ascension of his great Lord and Master.

From the very minute and circumstantial account this Evangelist gives of John the Baptist, he is supposed to have been one of his followers, and is thought to be that other disciple who, in the first chapter of his Gospel, is said to have been present with Andrew, when John declared Jesus to be "the Lamb of God," and thereupon to have followed him to the place of his abode.

He was by much the youngest of the apostles, yet he was admitted into as great a share of his Master's confidence as any of them. He was one of those to whom he communicated the most private transactions of his life: one of those whom he took with him when he raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead: one of those to whom he displayed a specimen of his divinity, in his transfiguration on the mount: one of those who were present at his conference with Moses and Elias, and heard that voice which declared him "the beloved Son of God;" and one of those who were companions in his solitude, most retired devotions, and bitter agonies in the garden.

These instances of particular favor, our apostle endeavored, in some measure, to answer by returns of particular kindness and constancy. For though he at first deserted his Master on his apprehension, yet he soon recovered himself, and came back to see his Saviour, confidently entered the high priest's hall, followed our Lord through the several particulars of his trial, and at last waited on him at his execution, owning him, as well as being owned by him, in the midst of armed soldiers, and in the thickest crowds of his most inveterate enemies. Here it was that our great Redeemer committed to his care his sorrowful and disconsolate mother, with his dying breath. And certainly the holy Jesus could not have given a more honorable testimony of his particular respect and kindness to St. John, than by leaving his own mother to his trust and care, and substituting him to supply that duty himself paid her while he resided in this vale of sorrow.

CHAPTER II.

The Transactions of St. John, from the Ascension of Christ to his Death.

After the ascension of the Saviour of the world, when the apostles made a division of the provinces among themselves, that of Asia fell to the share of St. John, though he did not immediately enter upon his charge, but continued at Jerusalem till the death of the blessed Virgin, which might be about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension. Being released from the trust committed to his care by his dying Master, he retired into Asia, and industriously applied himself to the propagation of Christianity, preaching where the Gospel had not yet been known, and confirming it where it was already planted. Many churches of note and eminence were of his foundation, particularly those of Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and others; but his chief place of residence was a Ephesus, where St. Paul had many years before founded a church, and constituted Timothy bishop of it.

After spending several years at Ephesus, he was accused to Domitian, who had begun a persecution against the Christians, as an eminent assertor of atheism and impiety, and a public subverter of the religion of the empire; so that by his command the proconsul sent him bound to Rome, where he met with the treatment that might have been expected from so barbarous a

prince, being thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil. But the Almighty, who reserved him for further service in the vineyard of his Son, restrained the heat, as he did in the fiery furnace of old, and delivered him from this seemingly unavoidable destruction. And surely one would have thought that so miraculous a deliverance should have been sufficient to have persuaded any rational man, that the religion he taught was from God, and that he was protected from danger by the hand of Omnipotence. But miracles themselves were not sufficient to convince this cruel emperor, or abate his fury. He ordered St. John to be transported to an almost desolate island in the Archipelago, called Patmos, where he continued several years, instructing the poor inhabitants in the knowledge of the Christian faith; and here, about the end of Domitian's reign, he wrote his book of Revelations, exhibiting by visions and prophetical representations, the state and condition of Christianity in the future periods and ages of the church.

Upon the death of Domitian, and the succession of Narva, who repealed all the odious acts of his predecessor, and by public edicts recalled those whom the fury of Domitian had banished. St. John returned to Asia, and fixed his seat again at Ephesus; the rather because the people of that city had lately martyred Timothy the bishop. Here, with the assistance of seven other bishops, he took upon himself the government of the large diocese of Asia Minor, and disposed of the clergy in the best manner that the circumstances of those times would permit, spending his time in an indefatigable execution of his charge, traveling from east to west, to instruct the world in the principles of the holy religion he was sent to propagate.

In this manner St. John continued to labor in the vineyard of his great Master, until death put a period to all his toils and sufferings; which happened in the beginning of Trajan's reign, in the ninety-eighth year of his age; and, according to Eusebius, his remains were buried near Ephesus.

St. John seems always to have led a single life; though some of the ancients tell us he was a married man. He was polished by no study of arts or learning; but what was wanting from human art, was abundantly supplied by the excellent constitution of his mind, and that fullness of divine grace with which he was adorned. His humility was admirable, studiously concealing his own honor. For in his epistles he never styles himself either apostle or evangelist: the title of presbyter, or elder, is all he assumes, and probably in regard to his age as much as his office. In his Gospel, when he speaks of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," he constantly conceals his own name, leaving the reader to discover whom he meant.

The greatest instance of our apostle's care for the souls of

men is in the writings he left to posterity; the first of which in time, though placed last in the sacred canon, is his Apocalypse, or Book of Revelations, which he wrote during his banishment at Patmos.

Next to the Apocalypse, in order of time, are his three epistles; the first of which is catholic, calculated for all times and places, containing the most excellent rules for the conduct of a Christian life, pressing to holiness and pureness of manners, and not to be satisfied with a naked and empty profession of religion; not to be led away with the crafty insinuation of seducers, and cautioning men against the poisonous principles and practices of the Gnostics. The apostle here, according to his usual modesty, conceals his name; it being of more consequence to a wise man what is said, than he who says it. It appears from St. Augustine, that this epistle was anciently inscribed to the Parthians, because, in all probability, St. John preached the Gospel in Parthia. The other two epistles are but short, and directed to particular persons; the one to a lady of great quality, the other to the charitable and hospitable Gaius, the kindest friend and most courteous entertainer of all indigent Christians.

Before he undertook the task of writing the Gospel, he caused a general fast to be kept by all the Asiatic churches, to implore the blessing of heaven on so great and momentous an undertaking. When this was done, he set about the work, and completed it in so excellent and sublime a manner, that the ancients generally compared him to an eagle soaring aloft among the clouds, whither the weak eye of man was not able to follow him. "Among all the evangelical writers (says St. Basil) none are like St. John, the son of thunder, for the sublimity of his speech, and the heighth of his discourses, which are beyond any man's capacity fully to reach and comprehend."—"St. John as a true son of thunder, (says Epiphanius,) by a loftiness of speech peculiar to himself, acquaints us, as it were, out of the clouds and dark recesses of wisdom, with the divine doctrine of the Son of God."

Such is the character given of the writings of this great apostle and evangelist, who was honored with the endearing title of being the beloved disciple of the Son of God: a writer so profound as to deserve by way of eminence, the character of "St. John the Divine."

ST. PHILIP.

CHAPTER I.

The Transactions of St. Philip, from his Birth to his being taken to the Apostleship.

This apostle was a native of Bethsaida, "the city of Andrew and Peter." He had the honor of being first called to be a disciple of the great Messiah, which happened in the following manner: Our blessed Saviour, soon after his return from the wilderness, where he had been tempted by the devil, met with Andrew, and his brother Peter, and after some discourse parted from them. The next day, as he was passing through Galilee, he found Philip, whom he presently commanded to follow him, the constant form he made use of in calling his disciples, and those that inseparably attended him. So that the prerogative of being first called, evidently belongs to St. Philip, he being the first of our Lord's disciples; for though Andrew and St. John were the first that came and conversed with the Saviour of the world, yet they immediately returned to their occupation, and were not called till a whole year after.

It cannot be doubted, that notwithstanding St. Philip was a native of Galilee, yet he was excellently skilled in the law and the prophets. Metaphrastes assures us, that he had, from his childhood, been excellently educated; that he frequently read over the books of Moses, and attentively considered the prophecies relating to the Messiah.

Nor was our apostle idle after the honor he had received of being called to attend the Saviour of the world; he immediately imparted the glad tidings of the Messiah's appearance to his brother Nathaniel, and conducted him to Jesus.

After being called to the apostleship we have very little record of him by the Evangelists. It was, however, to him that our Saviour proposed the question, where they should find bread sufficient to satisfy the hunger of so great a multitude. Philip answered, that it was not easy to procure so great a quantity; not considering that it was equally easy for Almighty power to feed double the number, when it should be his divine will. It was also to the same apostle that the Gentile proselytes, who came up to worship at Jerusalem, applied, when they were desirous to see the Saviour of the world. And it was with him our Lord had the discourse a little before the paschal supper.

The compassionate Jesus had been fortifying their minds with proper considerations against his departure from them, and had told them that he was going to prepare for them a place in the mansions of the heavenly Canaan; that he was "the way, the truth and the life;" and that no man could come to the Father but by him.

Philip, not thoroughly understanding the force of his Master's reasonings, begged of him, that he would "show them the Father."

Our blessed Lord gently reproved his ignorance, that after attending so long to his instructions, he should not know that he was the image of his Father, the express character of his infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, appearing in him; that he said and did nothing but by his Father's appointment; which, if they did not believe, his miracles were a sufficient evidence: that such demands were, therefore, unnecessary and impertinent; and that it was an indication of great weakness in him, after three year's education under his discipline and instruction, to appear so ignorant with regard to these particulars.

CHAPTER II.

The Transactions of St. Philip, to the time of his Martyrdom.

The ancients tell us, that in the distribution made by the apostles of the several regions of the world, the Upper Asia fell to his share, where he labored with an indefatigable diligence and industry. By the constancy and power of his preaching, and the efficacy of his miracles, he gained numerous converts, whom he baptized into the Christian faith, curing at once their bodies of infirmities and distempers, and their souls of errors and idolatry. He continued with them a considerable time in settling churches, and appointing them guides and ministers of religion.

After several years successfully exercising his apostolical office in all those parts, he came at last to Hiepolis, in Phrygia, a city remarkably rich and populous, but at the same time overrun with the most enormous idolatry.

St. Philip, being grieved to see the people so wretchedly enslaved by error and superstition, continually offered his addresses to heaven, till, by his prayers, and often calling on the name of Christ, he procured the death, or at least the vanishing of an enormous serpent, to which they paid adoration.

Having thus demolished their deity, he demonstrated to them how ridiculous and unjust it was for them to pay divine honors to such odious creatures: showed them that God alone was to be worshipped as the great parent of all the world, who in the beginning made man after his glorious image, and when fallen from that innocent and happy state, sent his own Son into the world to redeem him: that in order to perform this glorious work, he died on the cross, and rose again from the dead, and at the end of the world will come again to raise all the sons of men from the chambers of the dust, and sentence them to everlasting rewards or punishments. This discourse roused them from their lethargy; they were ashamed of their late idolatry, and great numbers embraced the doctrines of the Gospel.

This provoked the great enemy of mankind, and he had recourse to his old methods, cruelty and persecution. The magistrates of the city seized the apostle, and having thrown him into prison, caused him to be scourged. When this preparatory cruelty was over, he was led to execution, and, being bound was hanged against a pillar; or, according to others, crucified. The apostle being dead, his body was taken down by St. Bartholomew, his fellow laborer in the Gospel, and Mariamne, St. Philip's sister, the constant companion of his travels, and decently buried; after which, they confirmed the people in the faith of Christ, and departed from them.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW

CHAPTER I.

The Transactions of St. Bartholomew, from his Birth to the Ascension of his great Master.

This apostle is mentioned amongst the twelve immediate disciples of our Lord under the appellation of Bartholomew, though it is evident, from divers passages of Scripture, that he was also called Nathaniel: we shall therefore, in our account of his life, consider the names of Nathaniel and Bartholomew as belonging to one and the same person.

With regard to his descent and family, some are of opinion that he was a Syrian, and that he was descended from the Ptolemies of Egypt. But it is plain, from the evangelical his-

tory, that he was a Galilean; St. John having expressly told us that Nathaniel was of Cana, in Galilee.

The Scripture is silent with regard to his trade and manner of life, though, from some circumstances, there is room to imagine that he was a fisherman. He was at the first coming to Christ, conducted by Philip, who told him they had now found the long expected Messiah, so often foretold by Moses, and the prophets, "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." And when he objected that the Messiah could not be born at Nazareth, Philip desired him to come and satisfy himself that he was the Messiah.

At his approach, our blessed Saviour saluted him with this honorable appellation, that he was an "Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile;" not in an absolute, but restricted sense; for perfection cannot be attached to human nature, but in the character of the blessed Jesus, of whom it is said, with peculiar propriety, that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from *sinners;*" also, that he "knew no sin, neither was guile." that is, fraud, or deception, found in his tongue. Our Saviour knew that Bartholomew's doubt of his Messiahship arose from Philip's announcing him in the character of Jesus of Nazareth, a place stigmatized for the vices of its inhabitants; which on a similar occasion caused an interrogatory, which accords with Bartholomew's opinion: *Can* any *good* come out of Nazareth? Our Saviour therefore commends his frankness, by denominating him an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. In another sense, he appeared to "be a true Israelite," or one that "waited for redemption in Israel," which, from the times mentioned in the Scripture predictions, he knew to be near at hand.

He was greatly surprised at our Lord's salutations, wondering how he could know him at first sight, as imagining he had never before seen his face. But he was answered, that he had seen him while he was yet under the fig-tree, even before Philip called him. Convinced by this instance of our Lord's divinity, he presently made his confession, that he was now sure that Jesus was the promised Messiah, that Son of God whom he had appointed to govern the church. Our blessed Saviour told him, that if from this instance he could believe him to be the Messiah, he should have far greater arguments to confirm his faith; for that he should hereafter behold the heavens opened to receive him, and the angels visibly appearing joyful at his entrance into the heavenly Canaan.

CHAPTER II.

The Transactions of St. Bartholomew, from the Ascension of Christ to his Martyrdom.

Our apostle having his peculiar spot allotted him for the promulgation of the Gospel of his blessed Master, who had now ascended into heaven, and dispensed his Holy Spirit to fit and qualify his disciples for the important work, visited different parts of the world to preach the Gospel, and penetrated as far as the Hither India.

After spending considerable time in India, and the eastern extremities of Asia, he returned to the northern and western parts, and we find him at Hierpolis, in Phrygia, laboring in concert with St. Philip to plant Christianity in those parts; and to convince the blind idolaters of the evil of their ways, and direct them in the paths that lead to eternal salvation. This enraged the bigoted magistrates, and he was, together with St. Philip, designed for martyrdom, and in order to this, fastened to a cross; but their consciences pricking them for a time, they took St. Bartholomew down from the cross and set him at liberty.

From hence he retired to Lycaonia, and St. Chrysostom assures us that he instructed and trained up the inhabitants in the Christian discipline. His last remove was to Albanople, in Great Armenia, a place miserably overrun with idolatry, from which he labored to reclaim the people. But his endeavors to "turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God," were so far from having the desired effect, that it provoked the magistrates, who prevailed on the governor to put him to death, which he cheerfully underwent, sealing the truth of the doctrine he had preached, with his blood.

ST. MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.

The Transactions of St. Matthew, from his Birth to the Ascension of Christ.

St. Matthew, called also Levi, though a Roman officer, was a true Hebrew, and probably a Galilean. His trade was that of a publican or tax-gatherer to the Romans, an office detested

by the generality of the Jews, on two accounts, first, because having formed the custom of the Romans, they used every method of oppression to pay their rents to the Romans; secondly, because they demanded tribute of the Jews, who considered themselves as a free people, having received that privilege from God himself. And hence they had a common proverb among them, "Take not a wife out of that family in which there is a publican, for they are all publicans." That is, they are all thieves, robbers, and notorious sinners. And to this proverbial custom our blessed Saviour alludes, when speaking of an hardened sinner, on whom neither private reproofs, nor the public censures and admonitions of the church, can prevail. "Let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican."

Our blessed Saviour having cured a person long afflicted with the palsy, retired out of Capernaum, to walk by the sea-side, where he taught the people that flocked after him.

Here he saw Matthew sitting in his office, and called him to follow him. The man was rich, had a large and profitable employment, was a wise and prudent person, and doubtless understood what would be his loss to comply with the call of Jesus. He was not ignorant that he must exchange wealth for poverty, a custom-house for a prison, and rich and powerful masters for a naked and despised Saviour. But he overlooked all those considerations, left all his interest and relations, to become our Lord's disciple, and to embrace a more spiritual way of life.

The Pharisees, who sought all opportunities of raising objections against the doctrines of the blessed Jesus, took this opportunity of suggesting to his disciples, that it was highly unbecoming so pure and holy a person as their Master appeared to be, to converse so familiarly with the worst of men; with publicans and sinners, persons infamous to a proverb. But he presently replied to them, that these were the sick, and therefore needed the physician; that his company was of most consequence where the souls of men most required it; that God himself preferred works of mercy and charity, especially in doing good to the souls of men, infinitely above all ritual observances; and that the principal design of his coming into the world was not to call the righteous, or those who, like themselves, vainly pretend to be so, but sinners, humble, self-convinced sinners to repentance.

After St. Matthew's election to the apostleship, he continued with the rest till the ascension of his great and beloved Master; but the evangelical writers have recorded nothing particular concerning him during that period.

CHAPTER II.

The Transactions of St. Matthew from the Ascension of Christ to his Martyrdom.

After our blessed Saviour's ascension into heaven, St. Matthew, for the first eight years at least, preached in different parts of Judea; but afterwards he left the country of Palestine, to convert the Gentile world. Before his departure he was entreated by the Jewish converts to write the history of the life and actions of the blessed Jesus, and leave it among them as a standing monument of what he had so often delivered to them in his sermons. This he readily complied with, as we shall more particularly mention in giving an account of his Gospel.

After his leaving Judea, he traveled into several parts, especially Ethiopia, but the particular places he visited are not known with any certainty.

However, after laboring indefatigably in the vineyard of his Master, he suffered martyrdom at a city of Ethiopia, called Naddabar; but by what kind of death is not absolutely known, though the general opinion is, that he was slain with an halbert.

St. Matthew was a remarkable instance of the power of religion, in bringing men to a better temper of mind. If we reflect upon his circumstances while he continued a stranger to the great Redeemer of mankind, we shall find that the love of the world had possessed his heart. But notwithstanding this, no sooner did Christ call him, than he abandoned without the least scruple or hesitation, all his riches; nay, he not only renounced his lucrative trade, but ran the greatest hazard of displeasing the masters who employed him, for quitting their service without giving them the least notice, and leaving his accounts in confusion. Had our blessed Saviour appeared as a secular prince, clothed with temporal power and authority, it would have been no wonder for him to have gone over to his service; but when he appeared under all the circumstances of meanness and disgrace, when he seems to promise his followers nothing but misery and sufferings in this life, and to propose no other rewards than the invisible encouragements of another world, his change appears truly wonderful and surprising; but divine grace can subdue all oppositior.

His contempt of the world appeared in his exemplary temperance and abstemiousness from all delights and pleasures; nay even from the ordinary coveniences and accommodations of it.

He was mean and modest in his own opinion, always preferring others to himself; for whereas the other Evangelists, in describing the apostles by pairs, constantly place him before St. Thomas, he modestly places him before himself. The rest of the Evangelists are careful to mention the honor of his apostleship, but speak of his former sordid, dishonest, and disgraceful course of life, only under the name of Levi; while he himself sets it down with all the circumstances, under his own proper and common name. A conduct which at once commends the prudence and candor of the apostle, and suggests to us this useful reflection, that the greatest sinners are not excluded from divine grace; nor can any, if penitent, have just reason to despair, when publicans and sinners find mercy at the throne of grace.

The last thing we shall remark in the life of this apostle, is his Gospel, written at the entreaty of the Jewish converts, while he abode in Palestine; but at what time is uncertain; some will have it to have been written eight, some fifteen, and some thirty years, after our Lord's ascension. It was originally written in Hebrew, but soon after translated into Greek by one of the disciples.

After the Greek translation was admitted, the Hebrew copy was chiefly owned and used by the Nazarei, a middle sect between Jews and Christians; with the former, they adhered to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, and with the latter they believed in Christ, and embraced his religion; and hence this Gospel has been styled "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," and "The Gospel of the Nazarenes."

ST. THOMAS.

CHAPTER I.

The Transactions of St. Thomas, from his Birth to the Ascension of our blessed Saviour.

Evangelical history is entirely silent with regard either to the country or kindred of Thomas. It is, however, certain that he was a Jew, and in all probability a Galilean.

He was, together like the rest, called to the apostleship; and, not long after, gave an eminent instance of his being ready to

undergo the most melancholy fate that might attend him. For when the rest of the apostles dissuaded their Master from going into Judea, at the time of Lazarus' death, because the Jews lately endeavored to stone him, Thomas desired them not to hinder his journey thither, though it might cost them all their lives. "Let us go," said he, "that we may die with him:" concluding that, instead of Lazarus being raised from the dead, they should all, like him, be placed in the chambers of the dust.

When the holy Jesus, a little before his sufferings, had been speaking to them of the joys of heaven, and had told them that he was going to prepare mansions for them, that they might follow him, and that they knew both the place whither he was going, and the way thither; our apostle replied, that they knew not whither he was going, much less the way that would lead them thither. To which our Lord returned this short but satisfactory answer, "I am the way;" I am the person whom the Father has sent into the world to show mankind the paths that lead to eternal life, and therefore you cannot miss the way, if you follow my example.

After the disciples had seen their great Master expire on the cross, their minds were distracted by hopes and fears concerning his resurrection, about which they were not then fully satisfied; which engaged him the sooner to hasten his appearance, that by the sensible manifestations of himself, he might put the matter beyond all possibility of dispute. Accordingly, the very day in which he arose from the dead, he came into the house where they were assembled, while the doors about them were close shut, and gave them sufficient assurance that he was risen from the dead.

At this meeting Thomas was absent, having probably never joined their company since their dispersion in the garden, where every one's fears prompted him to consult his own safety. At his return they told him that the Lord had appeared to them; but he obstinately refused to give credit to what they said, or believe that it was really he, presuming it rather a spectre or apparition, unless he might see the very print of the nails, and feel the wounds in his hands and side.

But our compassionate Saviour would not take the least notice of his perverse obstinacy, but on that day seven-night came again to them, as they were solemnly met at their devotions, and calling to Thomas, bade him look upon his hands, put his fingers into the prints of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side, to satisfy his faith by a demonstration from the senses. Thomas was soon convinced of his error and obstinacy, confessing that he now acknowledged him to be his Lord and Master, saying, "My Lord and my God." Our Lord answered, that it was happy for him that he believed the testimony of his

own senses; but that it would have been more commendable in him to have believed without seeing, because it was foretold that the Son of God should burst the chains of death, and rise again from the dead.

CHAPTER II.

The Transactions of St. Thomas, from the Ascension of the Son of God to his Death.

Our great Redeemer having, according to promise before his ascension, poured an extraordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples, to qualify them for the great work of preaching the Gospel, St. Thomas as well as the rest, preached the Gospel in several parts of Judea; and after the dispersion of the Christian church in Jerusalem, repaired into Parthia, the province assigned him for his ministry. After which, as Sempronius and others inform us, he preached the Gospel to the Medes, Persians, Carmanians, Hyrcani, Bractarians, and the neighboring nations. During his preaching in Persia, he is said to have met with the Magi, or wise men, who had taken that long journey at our Saviour's birth to worship him, whom he baptized, and took with him as his companions and assistants in propagating the Gospel.

Leaving Persia, he traveled into Ethiopia, preaching the glad tidings of the Gospel, healing their sick, and working other miracles. to prove he had his commission from on high. And after traveling through these countries, he entered India.

When the Portuguese first visited these countries after their discovery of a passage by the Cape of Good Hope, they received the following particulars, partly from constant and uncontroverted traditions preserved by the Christians in those parts; namely, that St. Thomas came first to Socotora, an island in the Arabian Sea, and then to Cranganor where having converted many from the error of their ways, he traveled farther into the east; and having successfully preached the Gospel, returned back to the kingdom of Coromandel, where at Maliapour, the metropolis of that kingdom, not far from the mouth of the Ganges, he began to erect a place for divine worship, till prohibited by the idolatrous priests, and Sagamo, prince of that country. But after performing several miracles, the work was suffered to proceed, and Sagamo himself embra-

ced the Christian faith, whose example was soon followed by great numbers of his friends and subjects.

This remarkable success alarmed the Brachmans, who plainly perceived that their religion would soon be extirpated, unless some method could be found of putting a stop to the progress of Christianity; and therefore resolved to put the apostle to death. At a small distance from the city was a tomb, whither St. Thomas often retired for private devotions. Hither the Brachmans, and their armed followers pursued him, and while he was at prayer, they first shot at him with a shower of darts, after which one of the priests ran him through with a lance.

His body was taken up by his disciples, and buried in the church he had lately erected, and which was afterwards improved into a fabric of great magnificence.

St. Chrysostom says, that St. Thomas, who at first was the weakest and most incredulous of all the apostles, became, through Christ's condescension to satisfy his scruples, and the power of the divine grace, the most active and invincible of them all; traveling over most parts of the world, and living without fear in the midst of barbarous nations, through the efficacy of that almighty power which can make the weakest vessels to perform acts of the greatest difficulty and moment.

ST. JAMES THE LESS.

It has been doubted by some, whether this was the same with that St. James who was afterwards bishop of Jerusalem, two of this name being mentioned in the sacred writings, namely, St. James the Great, and St. James the Less, both Apostles. The ancients mention a third, surnamed the Just, which they will have to be distinct from the former, and bishop of Jerusalem. But this opinion is built on a sandy foundation, for nothing is plainer than that St. James the apostle (whom St. Paul calls "our Lord's brother," and reckons, with Peter and John, one of the pillars of the church) was the same who presided among the apostles, doubtless by virtue of his episcopal office, and determined the causes in the synod of Jerusalem. It is reasonable to think that he was the son of Joseph, afterwards the husband of Mary, by his first wife, whom St. Jerome styles Escha, and adds, that she was the daughter of Aggi, brother to Zacharias.

the father of John the Baptist. Hence he was reputed our Lord's brother. We find indeed several mentioned as the brethren of our Saviour in the evangelical history; but in what sense, was greatly controverted by the ancients. St. Jerome, St. Chrysostom, and some others, will have them to be called, from their being the sons of Mary, cousin-german, or, according to the Hebrew idiom, sister to the virgin Mary. But Eusebius, Epiphanius, and many others, tell us, they were the children of Joseph by a former wife. And this seems to be more natural, and best agrees with what the Evangelists say of them, when they enumerate the question of the Jews: evidently implying their astonishment, that a person descended from, and related to, not the opulent and the mighty, but those of a humble sphere, as his parents and brethren were known to be, should possess such extraordinary endowments. The Jews looked for a Messiah invested with all the pomp and splendor of an earthly potentate; well then might they ask, when they beheld the display of his power, "Whence then hath this man these things?"

After the resurrection, he was honored with the particular appearance of our Lord to him, which, though passed over in silence by the Evangelists, is recorded by St. Paul.

Some time after this appearance, he was chosen bishop of Jerusalem, and preferred before all the rest for his near relation to Christ; for the same reason we find Simon chosen to be his immediate successor in that see, because, after St. James, he was our Lord's next kinsman: a consideration that made Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, though they had been peculiarly honored by our Saviour, not to contend for this high and honorable station, but freely chose James bishop of Jerusalem.

When St. Paul came to Jerusalem after his conversion, he applied to St. James, and was honored by him with "the right-hand of fellowship." And it was to St. James that Peter sent the news of his miraculous deliverance out of prison. "Go," said he, "shew these things unto James and to the brethren," that is, to the whole church, especially to St. James the pastor of it.

He performed every part of his duty with all possible care and industry, omitting no particular necessary to be observed by a diligent and faithful guide of souls, strengthening the weak, instructing the ignorant, reducing the erroneous, reproving the obstinate: and by the constancy of his sermons, conquering the stubbornness of that perverse and refractory generation he had to deal with, many of the nobler and better sort being persuaded to embrace the Christain faith.

But a person so careful, so successful in his charge, could not fail of exciting the spite and malice of his enemies; a sort of men to whom the apostle has given too true a character, that

"they please not God, and are contrary to all men." They were vexed to see St. Paul had escaped their hands, by appealing unto Cæsar; and therefore turned their fury against St. James: but being unable to effect their design under the government of Festus, they determined to attempt it under the procuratorship of Albinus his successor, Ananus the younger, of the sect of the Sadducees, being high priest.

In order to this a council was summoned, and the apostle, with others arraigned and condemned as violators of the law. But that the action might appear more plausible and popular, the Scribes and Pharisees, masters in the art of dissimulation, endeavored to ensnare him; and, at their first coming, told him that they had all placed the greatest confidence in him: that the whole nation as well as they, gave him the title of a just man, and one that was no respecter of persons; that they therefore desired that he would correct the error and false opinion the people had conceived of Jesus, whom they considered as the Messiah, and take this opportunity of the universal confluence to the paschal solemnity to set them right in their opinions in this particular, and would go with them to the top of the temple, where he might be seen and heard by all.

The apostle readily consented, and being advantageously placed on a pinnacle of the temple, they addressed him in the following manner; "Tell us, for we have all the reason in the world to believe, that the people are thus generally led away, with the doctrine of Jesus who was crucified; tell us, what is the instruction of the crucified Jesus?" To which the apostle answered, with an audible voice, "Why do ye inquire of Jesus the Son of Man? He sits in heaven, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and will come again in the clouds of heaven." The people below hearing this, glorified the blessed Jesus, and openly proclaimed, "Hosanna to the Son of David."

The Scribes and Pharisees now perceived that they had acted foolishly; that instead of altering, he had confirmed the people in their belief; and that there was no way left but to dispatch him immediately, in order to warn others by his sufferings, not to believe in Jesus of Nazareth. Accordingly they suddenly cried out, That James himself was seduced, and become an impostor; and they immediately threw him from the pinnacle on which he stood, into the court below; but not being killed on the spot, he recovered himself so far as to rise on his knees, and pray fervently to heaven for his murderers. But malice is too diabolical to be pacified with kindness, or satisfied with cruelty. Accordingly his enemies, vexed that they had not fully accomplished their work, poured a shower of stones upon him, while he was imploring their forgiveness at the

throne of grace; and one of them dissatisfied with this cruel treatment, put an end to his misery with a fuller's club.

Thus did this great and good man finish his course, in the ninety-sixth year of his age, and about twenty-four years after our blessed Saviour's ascension into heaven. His death was lamented by all good men, even by the sober and just persons among the Jews themselves, as Josephus himself confesses.

He was a man of exemplary piety and devotion, educated under the strictest rules and institutions of religion. Prayer was his constant business and delight; he seems as it were to have lived upon it, and continually to have had his conversation in heaven; and he who has told us, "that the prayer of a righteous man availeth much," found it so by his own experience, heaven lending a more immediate ear to his petitions; so that in a time of remarkable drought, on his praying for rain, the clouds melted into fruitful showers.

Nor was his charity towards men, less than his piety towards God; he did good to all, watched over the souls of men, and studied to advance their eternal welfare. He was of a remarkably meek and humble temper, honoring what was excellent in others, and concealing what was valuable in himself. Neither the eminence of his relation to the blessed Jesus, nor the dignity of the place he so worthily filled, could induce him to entertain lofty thoughts of himself above the rest of his brethren; on the contrary, he strove to conceal whatever might place him in a higher rank than the other disciples of the Lord of glory. Though he was a relative to the Redeemer of mankind, he styles himself only "the servant of our Lord Jesus Christ," not so much as mentioning his being an apostle.

ST. SIMON THE ZEALOT

St. Simon, in the catalogue of the apostles, is styled "Simon the Canaanite," whence some conjecture he was born in Cana of Galilee, and others will have him to have been the bridegroom mentioned by St. John, at whose marriage our blessed Saviour turned the water into wine. But this word has no relation to his country, or the place of his nativity, being derived from the Hebrew word "kana," which signifies "zeal," and denotes a warm and sprightly temper. What some of the Evan-

gelists therefore call "Canaanite," others, rendering the Hebrew by the Greek word, style "Zealot:" not from his great zeal, his ardent affection to his Master, and his desire of advancing his religion in the world, but from his warm, active temper, and zealous forwardness in some particular sect of religion before his coming to our Saviour.

In order to understand this the better, it will be necessary to observe, that as there were several sects and parties among the Jews, so there was one, either a distinct sect, or at least a branch of the Pharisees, called the sect of the Zealots. This sect of the zealots took upon them to execute punishments in extraordinary cases; and that not only by the connivance, but with the permission both of the rulers and people, till in process of time, their zeal degenerated into all kinds of licentiousness and wild extravagance; and they not only became the pests of the commonwealth at home, but opened the door for the Romans to break in upon them, to their final and irrevocable ruin. They were continually prompting the people to throw off the Roman yoke, and assert their natural liberty, taking care, when they had thrown all things into confusion, to make their own advantage of the tumult. Josephus gives a large account of them, and every where bewails them as the great plague of the nation.

Many attempts were made, especially by Annas the high priest, to reduce them to order, and oblige them to observe the rules of sobriety: but all were in vain. They continued their violent proceedings, and joining with the Idumeans, committed every kind of outrage. They broke into the sanctuary, slew the priests themselves before the altar, and filled the streets of Jerusalem with tumults, rapine, and blood. Nay, when Jerusalem was closely besieged by the Roman army, they continued their detestable proceedings, creating fresh tumults and factions, and were indeed the principal cause of the ill success of the Jews in that fatal war.

This is a true account of the sect of the Zealots; though, whatever St. Simon was before, we have no reason to suspect, but after his conversion he was very zealous for the honor of his Master, and considered all those who were enemies to Christ as enemies to himself, however near they might be to him in any natural relation. And as he was very exact in all the practical duties of the Christian religion, so he showed a very serious and pious indignation towards those who professed religion, and a faith in Christ with their mouths, but dishonored their sacred profession, by their irregular and vicious lives, as some of the first professing Christians really did.

St. Simon continued in communion with the rest of the apostles and disciples at Jerusalem; and at the feast of Pentecost

received the same miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost; so that as he was qualified with the rest of his brethren for the apostolical office, in propagating the Gospel of the Son of God, we cannot doubt of his exercising his gifts with the same zeal and fidelity, though in what part of the world is uncertain. Some say he went into Egypt, Cyrene, and Africa, preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of those remote and barbarous countries. And others add, that after he had passed through those burning wastes, he took ship, and visited the frozen regions of the north, preaching the Gospel to the inhabitants of the western parts, and even to Britain: where having converted great multitudes and sustained the greatest hardships and persecutions, he was at last crucified, and buried in some part of Great Britain, but the place where, is unknown.

ST. JUDE.

This apostle is mentioned by three several names, in the evangelical history, namely, Jude or Judas, Thaddeus and Lebbeus.

He was brother to St. James the Less, afterwards bishop of Jerusalem, being the son of Joseph the reputed father of Christ, by a former wife. It is not known when or by what means he became a disciple of our blessed Saviour, nothing being said of him, till we find him in the catalogue of the twelve apostles: nor afterwards, till Christ's last supper, when discoursing with them about his departure, and comforting them with a promise that he would return to them again, (meaning after his resurrection,) and that the "world should see him no more, though they should see him," our apostle said to his Master, "Lord how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the world?"

Paulinus tells us that the province which fell to the share of St. Jude, in the apostolic division of the provinces, was Lybia; but he does not tell us whether it was the Cyrenian Lybia, which is thought to have received the Gospel from St. Mark, or the more southern parts of Africa. But however that be, in his first setting out to preach the Gospel, he traveled up and down Judea and Galilee; then through Samaria unto Idumea, and to the cities of Arabia and the neighboring countries, and after-

wards to Syria and Mesopotamia. Nicephoras adds, that he came at last to Edessa, where Abagarus governed, and where Thaddeus, one of the seventy, had already sown the seeds of the Gospel. Here he perfected what the other had begun; and having by his sermons and miracles established the religion of Jesus, he died in peace; but others say that he was slain at Berytus, and honorably buried there. The writers of the Latin Church are unanimous in declaring that he traveled into Persia, where, after great success in his apostolical ministry for many years, he was at last, for his freely and openly reproving the superstitious rites and customs of the Magi, cruelly put to death.

St. Jude left only one epistle, which is placed the last of those seven, styled catholic, in the sacred canon. It hath no particular inscription as the other six have, but it is thought to have been primarily intended for the Christian Jews, in their several dispersions, as St. Peter's epistles were. In it he tells them "that he at first intended to write to them in general of the common salvation, and establish and confirm them in it; but seeing the doctrine of Christ attacked on every side by heretics, he conceived it more necessary to spend his time in exhorting them to fight manfully in defence of the faith once delivered to the saints, and oppose the false teachers who labored so indefatigably to corrupt it."

It was some time before this epistle was generally received in the church. The author, indeed, like St. James, St. John, and sometimes St. Paul himself, does not call himself an apostle, styling himself only "the servant of Christ." But he has added what is equivalent, "Jude the brother of James," a character that can belong to no one but our apostle. And surely the humility of a follower of Jesus should be no objection against his writings.

ST. MATTHIAS.

As Matthias was not an apostle of the first election, immediately called and chosen of the Son of God himself, it cannot be expected that any account of him can be found in the evangelical history. He was one of our Lord's disciples, probably one of the seventy; he had attended on him the whole time of his public ministry, and after his death was elected into the apostle-

ship, to supply the place of Judas, who, after betraying his great Lord and Master, laid violent hands on himself.

The defection of Judas having made a vacancy in the apostolic college, the first thing they did, after their return from Mount Olivet, when their great Master ascended to the throne of his glory, was to fill up this vacancy with a proper person.

Accordingly, two persons were proposed, Joseph, called Barsabas, and Matthias, both duly qualified for the important office. The method of election was by lots, a way common both among the Jews and Gentiles for determining doubtful and difficult cases, especially in choosing judges or magistrates. And this course seems to have been taken by the apostle, because the Holy Ghost was not yet given, by whose immediate dictates and inspirations they were afterwards chiefly guided. The prayer being ended, the lots were drawn, by which it appeared that Matthias was the person, and he was accordingly numbered among the twelve apostles.

Not long after this election, the promised powers of the Holy Ghost were conferred upon the apostles, to qualify them for that great and difficult employment upon which they were sent, namely, the establishing the holy religion of the Son of God among the children of men.

St. Matthias spent the first year of his ministry in Judea, where he reaped a very considerable harvest of souls, and then traveled into different parts of the world, to publish the glad tidings of salvation to a people who had never before heard of a Saviour; but the particular parts he visited are not certainly known.

It is uncertain by what kind of death he left the regions of mortality, and sealed the truth of the Gospel he had so assiduously preached, with his blood. Dorotheus says, he finished his course at Sebastople, and was buried there, near the temple of the sun. An ancient Martyrology reports him to have been seized by the Jews, and as a blasphemer to have been stoned and then beheaded. But the Greek offices, supported herein by several ancient breviaries, tell us that he was crucified.

ST. MARK.

St. Mark was descended from Jewish parents, and of the tribe of Levi. Nor was it uncommon among the Jews to change their

names on some remarkable revolution or accident of life, or when they intended to travel into any of the European provinces of the Roman empire.

The ancients generally considered him as one of the seventy disciples; and Epiphanus expressly tells us, that he was one of those who, taking exception at our Lord's discourse of "eating his flesh and drinking his blood, went back and walked no more with him." But there appears no manner of foundation for these opinions, nor likewise for that of Nicephorus, who will have him to be the son of St. Peter's sister.

Eusebius tells us, that St. Mark was sent into Egypt by St. Peter to preach the Gospel, and accordingly planted a church in Alexandria, the metropolis of it; and his success was so very remarkable, that he converted multitudes both of men and women; persuading them not only to embrace the Christian religion, but also a life of more than ordinary strictness.

St. Mark did not confine himself to Alexandria, and the oriental parts of Egypt, but removed westward to Lybia, passing through the countries of Marmacia, Pentapolis, and others adjacent, where, though the people were both barbarous in their manners, and idolatrous in their worship, yet by his preaching and miracles he prevailed on them to embrace the tenets of the Gospel; nor did he leave hem till he had confirmed them in the faith.

After this long tour he returned to Alexandria, where he preached with the greatest freedom, ordered and disposed of the affairs of the church, and wisely provided for a succession, by constituting governors and pastors of it. But the restless enemy of the souls of men would not suffer our apostle to continue in peace and quietness, for while he was assiduously laboring in the vineyard of his Master, the idolatrous inhabitants, about the time of Easter, when they were celebrating the solemnities of Serapis, tumultuously entered the church, forced St. Mark, then performing divine service, from thence; and binding his feet with cords, dragged him through the streets, and over the most craggy places, to the Bucelus, a precipice near the sea, leaving him there in a lonesome prison, for that night; but his great and beloved Master appeared to him in a vision, comforting and encouraging his soul, under the ruins of his shattered body. The next morning early the tragedy began afresh, for they dragged him about in the same cruel and barbarous manner, till he expired. But their malice did not end with his death; they burnt his mangled body after they had so inhumanly deprived it of life: but the Christians, after the horrid tragedy was over, gathered up his bones and ashes, and decently interred them near the place where he used to preach. His remains were afterwards, with great pomp, removed from Alexandria to Ven-

ice, where they were religiously honored, and he was adopted the tutelar saint and patron of that state.

He suffered Martyrdom on the 25th of April, but the year is not absolutely known: the most probable opinion however is that it happened about the end of Nero's reign.

His Gospel, the only writing he left behind him, was written at the entreaty and earnest desire of the converts at Rome, who not content with having heard St. Peter preach, pressed St. Mark, his fellow disciple, to commit to writing an historical account of what he had delivered to them, which he performed with equal faithfulness and brevity, and being perused and approved of by St. Peter, it was commanded to be publicly read in their assemblies. It was frequently styled St. Peter's Gospel, not because he dictated it to St. Mark, but because the latter composed it in the same manner as St. Peter usually delivered his discourses to the people. And this is probably the reason of what St. Chrysostom observes, that in his style of expression he delights to imitate St. Peter, representing a great deal in a few words. The remarkable impartiality he observes in all his relations is plain from hence, that so far from concealing the shameful lapse and denial of Peter, he describes it with more aggravating circumstances than any of the other evangelists.

ST. LUKE

This disciple of the blessed Jesus was born at Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, a city celebrated by the greatest writers of those times for the pleasantness of its situation, the fertility of its soil, the riches of its commerce, the wisdom of its senate, and the civility and politeness of its inhabitants. It was eminent for schools of learning, which produced the most renowned masters in the arts and sciences. So that, being born, as it were, in the lap of the muses, he could not well fail of acquiring an ingenious and liberal education. But he was not contented with the learning of his own country; he traveled for improvement into several parts of Greece and Egypt, and became particularly skilled in physic, which he made his profession.

But those who would, from this particular, infer the quality of his birth and fortune, forget that the healing art was in those

early times generally practiced by servants; and hence Grotius is of opinion, that St. Luke was carried to Rome, and lived there a servant to some noble family, in quality of physician; but after obtaining his freedom he returned into his own country, and probably continued his profession till his death, it being so highly consistent with, and in many cases subservient to, the care of souls.

He was also famous for his skill in another art, namely, painting, as appears from an ancient inscription found in a vault near the church of St. Maria de Via Lata, at Rome, supposed to have been the place where St. Paul dwelt, which mentions a picture of the blessed Virgin, Una ex vii. ab Luca depictis, "being one of the seven painted by St. Luke."

St. Luke was a Jewish proselyte; but at what time he became a Christian is uncertain. It is the opinion of some, from the introduction to his Gospel, that he had the facts from the reports of others, who were eye-witnesses, and suppose him to have been converted by St. Paul: and that he learned the history of his Gospel from the conversation of that apostle, and wrote it under his direction; and that when St. Paul, in one of his epistles, says, "according to my Gospel," he means this of St. Luke, which he styled "his," from the great share he had in the composition of it.

On the other hand, those who hold that he wrote his Gospel from his own personal knowledge, observe, that he could not receive it from St. Paul, as an eye-witness of the matters contained in it, because all those matters were transacted before his conversion; and that he never saw our Lord before he appeared to him in his journey to Damascus, which was some time after he ascended into heaven. Consequently when St. Paul says, "according to my Gospel," he means no more than that Gospel in general which he preached; the whole preaching of the apostles being styled the Gospel.

But however this be, St. Luke became the inseparable companion of St. Paul, in all his travels, and his constant fellow-laborer in the work of the ministry. This endeared him to that apostle who seems delighted with owning him for his fellow-laborer, and in calling him "the beloved physician," and the "brother whose praise is in the Gospel."

St. Luke wrote two books for the use of the church, his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles; both which he dedicated to Theophilus, which many of the ancients suppose to be a feigned name, denoting a lover of God, a title common to all sincere Christians. But others think it was a real person, because the title of "most excellent" is attributed to him; the usual title and form of address in those times to princes and great men.

His Gospel contains the principal transactions of our Lord's life; and the particulars omitted by him are in general of less importance than those of the other Evangelists.

With regard to the Acts of the Apostles, written by St. Luke, the work was, no doubt performed at Rome, about the time of St. Paul's residing there, with which he concludes his history. It contains the actions, and sometimes the sufferings, of the principal apostles, especially St. Paul, whose activity in the cause of Christ made him bear a great part in the labors of his Master; and St. Luke being his constant attendant, an eye-witness of the whole carriage of his life, and privy to his most intimate transactions, was consequently capable of giving a more full and satisfactory account of them. Among other things he enumerates the great miracles the apostles did in confirmation of their doctrine.

In both these treaties his manner of writing is exact and accurate; his style noble and elegant, sublime and lofty, and yet clear and perspicuous, flowing with an easy and natural grace and sweetness, admirably adapted to an historical design. In short, as an historian he was faithful in his relations, and elegant in his writings; as a minister, careful and diligent for the good of souls; as a Christian, devout and pious; and to crown all the rest, laid down his life in testimony of the Gospel he had both preached and published to the world.

ST. BARNABAS.

St. Barnabas, was at first called Joses, a softer termination generally given by the Greeks to Joseph. His fellow disciples added the name of Barnabas, as significant of some extraordinary property in him. St. Luke interprets it "the son of consolation," from his being ever ready to minister to the afflicted, both by word and action.

He was a descendant of the tribe of Levi, of a family removed out of Judea, and settled in the Isle of Cyprus, where they had purchased an estate, as the Levites might do out of their own country. His parents finding him of a promising genius and disposition, placed him in one of the schools of Jerusalem, under the tuition of Gamaliel, St. Paul's master; an incident

which, in all probability, laid the first foundation for that intimacy that afterwards subsisted between these two eminent servants of the blessed Jesus.

The first mention we find of St. Barnabas in the Holy Scriptures, is the record of that great and worthy service he did the church of Christ, by succoring it with the sale of his patrimony in Cyprus, the whole price of which he laid at the apostles' feet, to be put into the common stock, and disposed of as they should think fit among the indigent followers of the holy Jesus.

And now St. Barnabas became considerable in the ministry and government of the church; for we find that St. Paul, coming to Jerusalem three years after his conversion, and not readily procuring admittance into the church, because he had been so grievous a persecutor of it, and might still be suspected of a design to betray it, addressed himself to Barnabas, a leading man among the Christians, and one that had personal knowledge of him. He accordingly introduced him to Peter and James, and satisfied them of the sincerity of his conversion, and in what a miraculous manner it was brought about. This recommendation carried so much weight with it, that Paul was not only received into the communion of the apostles, but taken into Peter's house, "and abode with him fifteen days." *Gal.* i. 18.

About four or five years after this, the agreeable news was brought to Jerusalem, that several of their body who had been driven out of Judea by the persecutions raised about St. Stephen, had preached at Antioch with such success, that a great number, both of Jews and proselytes, embraced Christianity; and were desirious that some of the superior order would come down and confirm them. This request was immediately granted, and Barnabas was deputed to settle the new plantation. Being himself "a good man and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith," his charitable deeds accompanying his discourses, and his pious life exemplifying his sound doctrine, the people were greatly influenced by him, and very considerable additions were made to the Christian church. But there being too large a field for one laborer, he went to fetch Saul from Tarsus, who came back with him to Antioch, and assisted him a whole year in establishing that church. Their labors prospered: their assemblies were crowded, and the disciples, who before this were called among themselves, "brethren, believers, elect," and by their enemies, "Nazarenes, and Galileans, were now called "Christians" first at Antioch.

When the apostles had fulfilled their charitable embassy, and stayed some time at Jerusalem to see the good effects of it, they returned again to Antioch, bringing with them John, whose surname was Mark, the son of Mary, sister to Barnabas, and at

whose house the disciples found both security for their persons, and conveniency for the solemnities of their worship. But soon after the apostles returned to Antioch, an express relation was made to the church by the mouth of one of the prophets who ministered there, that Barnabas and Saul should be set apart for an extraordinary work, unto which the Holy Ghost had appointed them. Upon this declaration, the church set apart a day for a solemn mission; after devout prayer and fasting, they laid their hands upon them, and ordained them to their office, which was to travel over certain countries, and preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. From this joint commission Barnabas obtained the name of an apostle, not only among later writers of the church, but with St. Paul himself, as we find in the history of the Acts of the Apostles.

Paul and Barnabas being thus consecrated "the apostles of the Gentiles," entered upon their province, taking with them John Mark, for their minister or deacon, who assisted them in many ecclesiastical offices, particularly in taking care of the poor.

The first city they visited after their departure from Antioch, was Selucia, a city of Syria, adjoining to the sea; from whence they sailed for the island of Cyprus, the native place of St. Barnabas, and arrived at Salamis, a port formerly remarkable for its trade. Here they boldly preached the doctrines of the Gospel in the synagogues of the Jews: and from thence traveled to Paphos, the capital of the island, and famous for a temple dedicated to Venus, the tutelar goddess of Cyprus. Here their preaching was attended with remarkable success; Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, being, among others, converted to the Christian faith.

Leaving Cyprus, they crossed the sea to preach in Pamphilia, where their deacon John, to the great grief of his uncle Barnabas, left them, and returned to Jerusalem: either tired with continual travels, or discouraged at the unavoidable dangers and difficulties which experience had sufficiently informed him would constantly attend the preachers of the Gospel from hardened Jews and idolatrous Gentiles.

Soon after their arrival at Lystra, Paul cured a man who had been lame from his mother's womb, which so astonished the inhabitants, that they believed them to be gods, who had visited the world in the forms of men. Barnabas they treated as Jupiter, their sovereign deity, either because of his age, or the gravity and comeliness of his person; for all the writers of antiquity represent him as a person of venerable aspect, and a majestic presence. But the apostles, with the greatest humility, declared themselves to be but mortals: and the inconstant populace soon satisfied themselves of the truth of what they had asserted, for

at the persuasion of their indefatigable persecutors, who followed them thither also, they made an assault upon them, and stoned Paul, till they left him for dead. But, supported by an invisible power from on high, he soon recovered his spirits and strength, and the apostles immediately departed for Derbe. Soon after their arrival, they again applied themselves to the work of the ministry, and converted many to the religion of the blessed Jesus.

From Derbe they returned back to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, in Pisidia, "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith; and that we must through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God." *Acts*, xiv. 22. After a short stay they again visited the churches of Pamphilia, Perga, and Attala, where they took ship, and sailed to Antioch in Syria, the place from whence they first set out. Soon after their arrival, they called the church of this city together, and gave them an account of their travels, and the great success with which their preaching in the Gentile world had been attended.

But they had not long continued in this city, before their assistance was required to compose a difference in the church, occasioned by some of the Jewish converts, who endeavored to persuade the Gentiles that they were bound to observe the law of Moses, as well as that of Christ; and be circumcised as well as baptized. Barnabas endeavored to dissuade the zealots from pressing such unnecessary observances: but all his endeavors proving ineffectual, he was deputed with St. Paul and others, to the church at Jerusalem, to submit the question, to be determined there in a full assembly. During their stay at Jerusalem, Mark, in all probability, reconciled himself to Barnabas, and returned with him and St. Paul to Antioch, after they had succeeded in their business in Jerusalem, and obtained a decree from the synod there, that the Gentile converts should not have circumcision and other Mosaic rites imposed upon them.

This determination generally comforted and quieted the minds of the Gentiles, but it did not prevent the bigoted Jews from keeping up a separation from them; and that with so much obstinacy, that when St. Peter, some time after, came to Antioch, he, for fear of offending them, deviated from his former practice and late speech and vote in the synod of Jerusalem, by refraining from all kinds of communion with the Gentiles: and Barnabas himself, though so great and good a man, was induced, by the authority of his example, to commit the same error; but, doubtless, on being reproved by St. Paul, they both took more courage, and walked according to the true liberty and freedom of the Gospel.

Some days after this last occurrence, Paul made a proposal to

Barnabas, that they should repeat their late travels among the Gentiles, and see how the churches they had planted increased in their numbers, and improved in the doctrines they had taught them. Barnabas very readily complied with the motion; but desired they might take with them his reconciled nephew, John Mark. This Paul absolutely refused, because, in their former voyage, Mark had not shown the constancy of a faithful minister of Christ, but consulted his own ease at a dangerous juncture; departed from them without leave at Pamphilia, and returned to Jerusalem. Barnabas still insisted on taking him; and the other continuing as resolutely opposed to it, a short debate arose, which terminated in a separation, whereby these two holy men, who had for several years been companions in the ministry, and with united endeavors propagated the Gospel of the Son of God, now took different provinces. Barnabas, with his kinsman, sailed to his own country, Cyprus; and Paul, accompanied by Silas, traveled to the churches of Syria and Cilicia.

After this separation from St. Paul, the sacred writings give us no account of St. Barnabas; nor are the ecclesiastical writers agreed among themselves with regard to the actions of this apostle after his sailing for Cyprus. This however seems to be certain, that he did not spend the whole remainder of his life in that island, but visited different parts of the world, preaching the glad tidings of the Gospel, healing the sick, and working other miracles among the Gentiles. After long and painful travels, attended with different degrees of success, in different places, he returned to Cyprus, his native country, where he suffered martyrdom, in the following manner: certain Jews coming from Syria and Salamis, where Barnabas was then preaching the Gospel, being highly exasperated at his extraordinary success, fell upon him as he was disputing in the synagogue, dragged him out, and after the most inhuman tortures, stoned him to death. His kinsman, John Mark, who was a spectator of this barbarous action, privately interred his body in a cave, where it remained till the time of the Emperor Zeno, in the year of Christ, 485, when it was discovered, with St. Matthew's Gospel in Hebrew, written with his own hand, lying on his breast.

ST. STEPHEN

Both the Scriptures and the ancient writers are silent with regard to the birth, country, and parents of St. Stephen. Epiphanius is of opinion that he was one of the seventy disciples: but this is very uncertain. Our blessed Saviour appointed his seventy disciples to teach the doctrines and preach the glad tidings of the Gospel; but it does not appear that St. Stephen and the six other first deacons, had any particular designation before they were chosen for the service of the tables; and therefore St. Stephen could not have been one of our Lord's disciples, though he might have often followed him, and listened to his discourses.

He was remarkably zealous for the cause of religion, and full of the Holy Ghost: working many wonderful miracles before the people, and pressing them, with the greatest earnestness, to embrace the doctrine of the Gospel.

This highly provoked the Jews; and some of the synagogues of the freed-men of Cyrenia, Alexandria, and other places, entered into dispute with him; but being unable to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake, they suborned false witnesses against him, to testify that they heard him blaspheme against Moses and against God. Nor did they stop here; they stirred up the people by their calumnies: so that they dragged him before the council of the nation, or great Senhedrim, where they produced false witnesses against him, who deposed that they heard him speak against the temple, and against the law, and affirm that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy the holy place, and abolish the law of Moses. Stephen, supported by his own innocence, and an invisible power from on high, appeared undaunted in the midst of this assembly, and his countenance shone like that of an angel; when the high priest asking him what he had to offer against the accusations laid to his charge, he answered in a plain and faithful address to the Jews, which he closed in the following manner.

"Ye stiff-necked, ye uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye will for ever resist the Holy Ghost. Ye tread in the paths of your fathers; as they did, so do you still continue to do. Did not your fathers persecute every one of the prophets? Did not they slay them who showed the coming of the Holy One, whom ye yourselves have betrayed and murdered? Ye have received the law by the disposition of angels, but never kept it."

At these words they were so highly enraged, that they all gnashed their teeth against him. But Stephen, lifting up his eyes to heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of Omnipotence. Upon which he said to the council, "I see the heavens open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." This so greatly provoked the Jews, that they cried out with one voice, and stopped their ears, as if they had heard some dreadful blasphemy; and falling upon him, they dragged him out of the city, and stoned him to death. It was the custom of the Jews on these occasions, for the witnesses to throw the first stone. Whether they observed this particular at the martyrdom of Stephen is uncertain; but the Evangelist tells us, that the witnesses were principally concerned in this action; for they stripped off their clothes, and laid them at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul, then a violent persecutor of the Christian church, but afterwards one of the most zealous preachers of the Gospel.

Stephen, while they were mangling his body with stones, was praying to Omnipotence for their pardon. "Lord," said he, "lay not this sin to their charge." And then calling on his dear Redeemer to receive his spirit, he yielded up his soul.

TIMOTHY.

Timothy was a convert and disciple of St. Paul. He was born, according to some, at Lystria; or, according to others, at Derbe. His father was a Gentile, but his mother a Jewess, whose name was Eunice, and that of his grandmother, Lois.

These particulars are taken notice of, because St. Paul commends their piety and the good education which they had given Timothy. When St. Paul came to Derbe and Lystra, about the year of Christ 51 or 52, the brethren gave a very advantageous testimony of the merit and good disposition of Timothy: and the apostle would have him along with him, and he initiated him at Lystra before he received him into his company. Timothy applied himself to labor with St. Paul in the business of the Gospel; and did him many important services, through the whole course of his preaching. It is not known when he was made a bishop; but it is believed that he received very early the imposition of the apostle's hands; and that in consequence of a

particular revelation, or from the Holy Ghost. St. Paul calls him not only his dearly beloved son, but also his brother, the companion of his labors, and a man of God. He declared there were none more united with him in heart and mind, than Timothy.

This holy disciple accompanied St. Paul to Macedonia, to Philippi, to Thessalonica, to Berea; and when the apostle went from Berea, he left Timothy and Silas there to confirm the converts. When he came to Athens, he sent for Timothy to come thither to him; and when he was come and had given him an account of the churches of Macedonia, St. Paul sent him back to Thessalonica, from whence he afterwards returned with Silas, and came to St. Paul at Corinth. There he continued with him, and the apostle mentions him, with Silas, at the beginning of the two epistles which he then wrote to the Thessalonians.

Some years after this, St. Paul sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia; and gave Timothy orders to call at Corinth, to refresh the minds of the Corinthians, with regard to the truths which he had inculcated in them. Some time after, writing to the same Corinthians, he recommends them to take care of Timothy, and send him back in peace; after which, Timothy returned to St. Paul in Asia, who there staid for him. They went together into Macedonia; and the apostle puts Timothy's name with his own, before the second epistle to the Corinthians, which he wrote to them from Macedonia, about the middle of the year of Christ 57. And he sends his recommendations to the Romans in the letter which he wrote to them from Corinth the same year.

When St. Paul returned from Rome, in 64, he left Timothy at Ephesus to take care of that church, of which he was the first bishop, as he is recognized by the council of Chalcedon. St. Paul wrote to him from Macedonia, the first of the two letters which are addressed to him. He recommends him to be more moderate in his austerities, and to drink a little wine because of the weakness of his stomach, and his frequent infirmities. After the apostle came to Rome, in the year 65, being now very near his death, he wrote to him his second letter, which was full of the marks of his kindness and tenderness for this, his dear disciple, and which is justly looked upon as the last will of St. Paul. He desires him to come to Rome to him before winter, and bring with him several things which St. Paul had left at Troas. If Timothy went to Rome, as it is probable he did, he must have been a witness of the martyrdom of this apostle, in the year of Christ 66.

If he did not die before the year 97, we can hardly doubt but that he must be the pastor of the church of Ephesus, to whom John writes in his Revelations: though the reproaches with which he seems to load him for his instability in having left his first

love, do not seem to agree to so holy a man as Timothy was. Thus he speaks to him: "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil. and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars. And hast borne and hast p tience, and for my name's sake hast labored and hast not fainted. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee; because thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen: and repent and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent." The greatest part of interpreters think that these reproaches do not so much concern the person of Timothy, as that of some members of his church, whose zeal was grown cool. But others are persuaded that they may be applied to Timothy himself, who made ample amends, by the martyrdom which he suffered, for the reproaches mentioned by St. John in this place. It is supposed that Timothy had Onesimus for his successor.

TITUS.

Titus was a Gentile by religion and birth, but converted by St. Paul, who calls him his son. St. Jerome says that he was St. Paul's interpreter; and that, probably, because he might write what St. Paul dictated, or explained in Latin what this apostle said in Greek; or rendered into Greek, what St. Paul said in Hebrew or Syriac. St. Paul took him with him to Jerusalem, when he went thither in the year 51 of the vulgar era, about deciding the question which was then started, whether the converted Gentiles ought to be made subject to the ceremonies of the law? Some would then have obliged him to circumcise Titus; but neither he nor Titus would consent to it. Titus was sent by the same apostle to Corinth, upon occasion of some disputes which then divided the church. He was very well received by the Corinthians, and very much satisfied with their ready compliance: but would receive nothing from them, imitating thereby the disinterestedness of his master.

From hence he went to St. Paul in Macedonia, ar d gave him an account of the state of the church at Corinth. A little while after, the apostle desired him to return again to Corinth, to set things in order preparatory to his coming. Titus readily under-

took this journey, and departed immediately, carrying with him St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. Titus was made bishop of the Isle of Crete, about the 63d year of Christ, when St. Paul was obliged to quit that island, in order to take care of the other churches. The following year he wrote to him, to desire that as soon as he should have sent Tychicus or Artemus to him for supplying his place in Crete, Titus would come to him to Nicopolis in Macedonia, or to Nicopolis in Epirus, upon the gulf of Ambracia, where the apostle intended to pass his winter.

The subject of this epistle is to represent to Titus what are the qualities that a bishop should be endued with. As the principal function which Titus was to exercise in the Isle of Crete was to ordain priests and bishops, it was highly incumbent on him to make a discreet choice. The apostle also gives him a sketch for the advice and instructions which he was to propound to all sorts of persons; to the aged, both men and women; to young people of each sex; to slaves or servants. He exhorts him to keep a strict authority over the Cretans; and to reprove them with severity, as being a people addicted to lying, wickedness, idleness and gluttony. And as many converted Jews were in the churches of Crete, he exhorts Titus to oppose their vain traditions and Jewish fables: and at the same time to show them that the observation of the legal ceremonies is no longer necessary; that the distinction of meat is now abolished; and that every thing is pure and clean to those that are so themselves: he puts him in mind of exhorting the faithful to be obedient to temporal power; to avoid disputes, quarrels, and slander; to apply themselves to honest callings; and to shun the company of an heretic, after the first and second admonition.

The epistle to Titus has always been acknowledged by the church. The Marcionites did not receive it, nor did the Basilidians, and some other heretics; but Tition, the head of the Encratics, received it, and preferred it before all the rest. It is not certainly known from what place it was written, nor by whom it was sent.

Titus was deputed to preach the Gospel in Dalmatia; and he was still there in the year 65, when the apostle wrote his second epistle to Timothy. He afterwards returned into Crete; from which it is said he propagated the Gospel into the neighboring islands. He died at the age of 94, and was buried in Crete. We are assured that the cathedral of the city of Candia is dedicated to his name; and that his head is preserved there entire. The Greeks keep his festival on the 25th of August, and the Latins on the 4th of January.

THE VIRGIN MARY.

As we are taught by the predictions of the prophets, that a virgin was to be the mother of the promised Messiah, so we are assured by the unanimous concurrence of the evangelists, that this virgin's name was Mary, the daughter of Joachim and Anna, of the tribe of Judah: and married to Joseph of the same tribe. The Scripture indeed, tells us no more of the blessed virgin's parents, than that she was of the family of David.

What is said concerning the birth of Mary and her parents, is to be found only in some apocryphal writings; but which, however, are very ancient. St. John says, that Mary the wife of Cleophas was the virgin's sister Mary, that was of the royal race of David. She was allied likewise to the family of Aaron, since Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias, the mother of John the Baptist, was her cousin.

Not to build upon uncertainties, thus much we are assured by the testimony of an angel, that she was happy above all other women, in the divine favor; that she was full of grace; and that the Lord was with her in a peculiar manner.

For since the Son of God, in order to become a man, and to dwell among us, was obliged to take a human body from some woman, it was agreeable to his infinite wisdom that he should choose for this purpose one whose endowments of body and mind were most holy and pious; who excelled the rest of her sex in chaste and virtuous dispositions; and who, in short, was a repository of all the divine graces.

The excesses of that devotion which has been paid to the blessed virgin, and the legendary tales of monks, cannot in reason blemish her real excellencies, no more than the idolatries of the pagans can obscure the light of the sun which is deified. After all the abuses of superstition or profaneness, the extremes of honor and dishonor, there will ever be a very high esteem and veneration due to the mother of the blessed Jesus.

That the mother of our Lord, notwithstanding her marriage, was even in that state to remain a pure virgin, and to conceive Christ in a miraculous manner, is the clear doctrine of the holy Scriptures. "Behold," says Isaiah, in chap. vii., prophesying of this mysterious incarnation, "a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." The Hebrew word *Alman* most properly signifies a virgin, and so it is translated here by all the ancient interpreters; and never once used in the Scriptures in any other

sense, as several learned men have proved against the particular pretensions of the modern Jews. It primarily signifies "hidden," or "concealed;" whence it is used to denote a virgin, because of the custom in the eastern countries of keeping such concealed from the view of men, never suffering them to stir out of the women's apartments.

Though we cannot doubt but that God, who ordained this mystery, provided for all circumstances requisite to its accomplishment; yet we may consider which way a decorum was preserved in this case by marriage. St. Matthew says, "The virgin was espoused to Joseph; and that before they came together, she was found to be with child of the Holy Ghost." Whence we may conclude that it was not a constant custom for the bride to go and live at the bridegroom's house immediately upon her being affianced to him.

Notwithstanding the various circumstances relating to this affair, as told us in apocryphal books, are not to be relied on as certain; yet, however, Mary's resolution of continency, even in a married state, cannot be called in question, since her virginity is attested by the Gospel; and that herself, speaking to the angel, who declared to her that she would become the mother of a son told him, "That she knew not a man," or that she lived in continency with her husband. For which reason, when Joseph perceived her pregnancy, he was at first so exceedingly surprised and scandalized at it, that he resolved to put her away, but secretly, without making any noise, and without observing the common formalities: for he knew the mutual resolution they had agreed to, of being in continence, though in a state of marriage.

The virgin Mary then being espoused, or married, to Joseph, the angel Gabriel appeared to her, in order to acquaint her, that she should become the mother of the Messiah. Mary asked him how that could be, since she knew no man. To which the angel replied, that the Holy Ghost should come upon her, and the power of the Highest should overshadow her; so that she should conceive without the concurrence of any man. And to confirm what he said to her, and show that nothing is impossible to God, he added, that her cousin Elizabeth, who was old, and had been barren, was then in the sixth month of her pregnancy. Mary answered him, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word." And by the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost, she presently conceived the Son of God, the true Emanuel, that is to say, "God with us." Whether the holy virgin, immediately after the annunciation, went up to the passover at Jerusalem (as some have imagined, this being the season of the year for it) or not, we have no account from the Evangelist St. Luke;

but this he assures us, that a little while after she set out for Hebron, a city in the mountains of Judah, in order to visit her cousin Elizabeth, to congratulate her upon her pregnancy, which she had learned from the angel, at an age when such a blessing was not usually to be expected; and no sooner had she entered the house and began to speak, than upon Elizabeth's hearing the voice of Mary's salutation, her child, young John the Baptist, transported with supernatural emotions of joy, leaped in her womb. Whereupon she was filled with the Holy Ghost; and being, by divine inspiration, acquainted with the mystery of the incarnation, she saluted Mary, and cried out, "Blessed art thou amongst women; and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For lo! as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." Then Mary, filled with acknowledgments and supernatural light, praised God, saying, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," &c., as we find it in the hymn called Magnificat.

After Mary had continued here about three months, till Elizabeth was delivered (as St. Ambrose thinks, that she might see him on whose account she principally made that visit) she then returned to her own house.

When she was ready to be delivered an edict was published by Cæsar Augustus, in the year of the world 4000, the first of Christ, and the third before the vulgar era, which decreed, that all the subjects of the Roman empire should go to their respective cities and places, there to have their names registered according to their families. Thus Joseph and Mary, who were both of the linage of David, repaired to the city of Bethlehem, the original and native place of their family. But while they were in this city, the time being fulfilled in which Mary was to be delivered, she brought forth her first-born son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger of the stable or cavern, whither they had retired; for they could find no place in the public inn, because of the great concourse of people that were then at Bethlehem on the same occasion; or they were forced to withdraw into the stable of the inn, not being able to get a more convenient place for her to be delivered.

The Greek fathers generally agree that the place of Christ's birth was a cavern. Justin and Eusebius place it out of the city, but in the neighborhood; and St. Jerome says, it was at the extremity of the city, towards the south. It was commonly believed that the virgin brought forth Jesus the night after her

arrival at Bethlehem, or on the 25th of December. Such is the ancient tradition of the church. The fathers inform us that Mary brought forth Jesus Christ without pain, and without the assistance of any midwife: because she had conceived him without concupiscence; and that neither she, nor the fruit she brought forth, had any share in the curse pronounced against Adam and Eve.

At the same time the angels made the birth of Christ known to the shepherds, who were in the fields near Bethlehem; and who came in the night to see Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger, in order to pay him their tribute of adoration. Mary took notice of all these things, and laid them up in her heart. Some time after came the Magi, or wise men, from the East, and brought to Jesus the mysterious presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, having been directed thither by a star which led the way before them, to the very place where the babe lay. After this, being warned by an angel that appeared to them in a dream, they returned into their own country by a way different from that by which they came, without giving Herod the intelligence he wanted: which he pretended was in order to come and worship the babe, though his real design was to cut him off, from a jealousy of his rivalling him in his kingdom.

But the time of Mary's purification being come, that is, forty days after the birth of Jesus, she went to Jerusalem in order to present her son in the temple; and there to offer the sacrifice appointed by the law, for the purification of women after childbirth. At that time there was at Jerusalem an old man, named Simeon, who was full of the Holy Ghost, and had received a secret assurance that he should not die before he had seen Christ the Lord. Accordingly, he came into the temple by the impulse of the Spirit of God, and taking the little Jesus in his arms, he blessed the Lord; and then addressing himself to Mary, said, "This child is set for the rising and falling of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against you; even so far that thy own soul shall be pierced as with a sword, that the secret thoughts in the hearts of many may be discovered."

Afterwards, when Joseph and Mary were preparing to return to their own country of Nazareth, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, bidding him to retire into Egypt with Mary, and the child, because Herod had a design to destroy Jesus. Joseph obeyed the admonition, and continued in Egypt till after the death of Herod; when both he and Mary returned to Nazareth, not daring to go to Bethlehem, because it was the jurisdiction of Archelaus, the son and successor of Herod the Great.

Joseph and Mary went every year to Jerusalem to the feast of the passover: and when Jesus was twelve years of age, they brought him with them to the capital. When the days of the festival were ended, they set out on their return home; but the child Jesus continued at Jerusalem, without their perceiving it; and thinking that he might be with some of the company, they went on a day's journey; when not finding him among their acquaintance, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him. Three days after, they found him in the temple, sitting among the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. When they saw him, they were filled with astonishment; and Mary said to him, My son, why have you served us thus? Behold your father and myself, who have sought you in great affliction. Jesus answered them, Why did you seek me? did not you know that I must be employed about my father's business? Afterwards he returned with them to Nazareth, and lived in filial submission to them; but his mother laid up all these things in her heart. The Gospel says nothing more of the Virgin Mary, till the marriage of Cana of Galilee, where she was present, with her son Jesus.

In process of time according to the divine appointment respecting his mission, our Saviour resolved to manifest himself to the world, and therefore went to the baptism of St. John, from thence into the wilderness, and thence to the before-mentioned wedding, to which he, with his mother and disciples, had been invited. At this entertainment the provision of wine being somewhat scanty, (probably because the friends of the married couple were but mean) Christ's mother told her son they had no wine, not doubting of his power to supply them: to which Jesus answered in terms which had some appearance of a rebuke, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." St. Chrysostom, and the followers of him in his explications, impute what was said by the holy Virgin to some motive of vanity, and that she was tempted by a desire of seeing her own credit raised by the miracles of her son; but the other fathers and commentators ascribe it to her charity and compassion towards these poor people. And it is thought that Christ's answer was intended for more general use than the present occasion; namely, to teach us to wait God's time of doing his own works; and certainly our Lord designed no affront to his mother, to whom he always paid a pious and filial reverence. This answer is imputed by the said fathers and commentators to Jesus, not as man; but to Jesus, as the Son of God. In this respect he says to Mary, What have I to do with thee? I know when I ought to show forth my power; nor does it belong to you to appoint me the time of working miracles; since the proper time for this has not yet begun; and further intima

ting, that when it did, these were not to be wrought out of any private, partial, and civil views, but in pursuance of that great end which he had in charge, the conversion and salvation of mankind. And so his mother understood him, receiving the answer with meekness, and charging the servants to attend him, and do whatever he commanded them.

There being in the room six great stone pitchers, Jesus ordered them to be filled brim-full of water; and afterwards commanded the servants to fill out and carry it to the master of the feast, who, on tasting, found it was excellent wine. And this is the first miracle Jesus wrought at the beginning of his public ministry.

From hence our Lord went to Capernaum with his mother and brethren; that is, with his relations and disciples, in order, as St. Chrysostom thinks, to fix the Virgin Mary in a settled habitation, while he traveled about the country in the exercise of his ministry; and this indeed, seems to be the place where the Holy Virgin afterwards principally resided. St. Epiphanius, on the contrary, believed that she followed him every where, during the whole time of his preaching; though we do not find that the Evangelists make any mention of her when they speak of several holy women of Galilee, who followed him and ministered to his necessities.

The gospel informs us that as our blessed Saviour, in the course of his travels for the fulfillment of his divine mission, was on a certain day teaching in a house at Capernaum, so great a crowd of people stood about him that neither he nor his disciples had time to take any refreshment, which caused a report to be spread abroad, that he had fainted away. It was not the multitude who raised and circulated this false report, but the ignorant and malicious Scribes and Pharisees, who were ever devising such methods as their malicious dispositions could project to lessen the character and and reputation of the blessed Jesus, and to prepossess the minds of the people against the doctrines he preached and taught. It was from this view they raised so unjust a report, and which occasioned some confusion and interruption for a time; but it was soon discovered to be false, the tumult appeased, and the enemies of our Lord looked upon by the people with that contempt they deserved.

The mother of Jesus and his bretheren, as it was natural for them, upon hearing such a report, came instantly to seek him, and endeavored to take him out of the crowd, in order to give him all the relief in their power. But when they could not get into the house for the throngs of people, they caused a message to be coneyed from one to another, till it was told Jesus "that his mother and his brethren were at the door, and desired to speak with h'm." Jesus being accordingly informed of their

coming, and that they waited to speak to him, being at that instant engaged in the work of his ministry, preaching the word of God, he asked this question: Who is my mother, and who are my bretheren! and looking upon those that were round about him, he said, These are my mother and bretheren; declaring, "That whosoever did the will of his heavenly Father, the same was his mother, and sister, and brother." This was what Christ hath taught in another place, that we must prefer God to all human relations, and give the preference to his service. But this saying could not reflect upon his mother, who was among the principal of those who did the will of his heavenly Father. Immediately upon her approach, a woman of the company said with a loud voice, directing her words to Jesus, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked." To which he replied, "Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." Not intimating hereby that she who had the honor to bear him did not deserve to be called blessed throughout all generations; but that even her happiness consisted more in doing the will of Christ, than in giving him a human body.

From this time we have no further account of the holy Virgin, till we find her in Jerusalem at the last passover our Saviour celebrated in that city. Here she saw all that was transacted against him, followed him to Mount Calvary, and stayed at the foot of the cross during the passion of her blessed Son. We cannot doubt that her soul was at this time pierced through, as old Simeon prophesied, with the most acute pains for the death of such a Son. Yet her constancy was remarkable; for when the apostles were frightened away from their Master, she with a courage undaunted and worthy of the mother of Christ, continued even in the midst of the executioners, being prepared to die with her Son.

On this melancholy occasion we cannot but suppose the holy Virgin to have been affected with sentiments fit for one who had so miraculously conceived, and so carefully observed and laid up in her mind all occurrences that related to the Son of God.

Our blessed Lord, who came to set us a pattern of all virtue through the whole course of his life, was pleased, in these last moments, to teach us that in what circumstances soever we are, we must never cast off that love and care which God's law obliges us to have for those who gave us life. Being now ready to leave the world, and seeing his own mother at the foot of the cross, and his beloved disciple, St. John, near her, he bequeathed her to him by his last will and testament, saying to his mother, "Woman, behold thy son." And to the disciple,

"Behold thy mother;" and from that hour the disciple took her home to his own house.

It is not to be doubted but that our Saviour appeared to his holy mother immediately after his resurrection, and that she was the first, or at least one of the first, to whom he vouchsafed this great consolation.

St. Luke acquaints us, in the first chapter of the Acts, that the Virgin Mary was with the apostles and others, and continued with them when assembled at Jerusalem after his ascension, waiting for the descent of the Holy Ghost; and it is probable that from her they learned the whole history of our Lord's private life before his baptism; though St. Chrysostom will have them to be taught it by revelation. After this she dwelt in the house of St. John the Evangelist, who took care of her as his own mother. It is thought that he took her along with him to Ephesus, where she continued some time, and there is a letter of the council of Ephesus, importing, that in the fifth century it was believed she was buried there.

Yet this opinion was not so universally received but that some authors of the same age think the Virgin Mary died and was buried at Jerusalem: or rather in her sepulchre at Gethsemane, near that city, where to this day it is shown in a magnificent church dedicated to her name.

Epiphanius, the most learned father of the fourth century, declares he could not tell whether she died a natural death, or by martyrdom: or whether she was buried or not. "None (says he) knows any thing of her decease: but that it was glorious cannot be doubted. That body which was perfectly chast and pure must enjoy a happiness worthy of her through whom the Sun of Righteousness arose and shone upon the world."

A learned writer has added to the before-cited passage of the council of Ephesus, another remark from their act: "That the cathedral church of Ephesus was dedicated under the name of the Virgin Mary; and that we find no other church of her name at that time in any approved author." For though the holy Virgin was always held in great veneration, yet it was not the custom of the first ages to give the name of any saint to a church, except they had some of the relics, or built it in the place where such a saint was martyred; or for some reason of the like nature.

The sentiments of the Roman church are, that she is dead; but they are divided as to her having risen again: or whether she stays for the general resurrection at Ephesus, Jerusalem, or any other place.

With regard to the age at which she died, and the precise year of her death, it is needless to trouble ourselves about this

inquiry, since nothing can be said on these matters but what is very doubtful: and they cannot be fixed but at random. Nicephorus Callistus, and those who have followed him, give no proof of what they advance on this subject, and therefore deserve no credit. Nor shall we build upon the description of the holy Virgin given us by the same author, who says, that she was of moderate stature; or according to some, a little below the ordinary stature of women; that her complexion was of the color of wheat, her hair fair, her eyes lively, the eye-balls yellowish, or olive colored, her eye-brows black and semicircular, her nose pretty long, her lips red, her hands and fingers large, her hair grave, simple and modest, her clothes neat, without any pride and ostentation, and of the natural color of the wool. It has been said that St. Luke drew her picture; and in several places are shown pictures of her, which, it is affirmed, are copies from the original by St. Luke.

The above mentioned Nicephorus Callistus, an author of the 14th century, is the first who has spoken of this in a positive manner; but Theodorus, lecturer of the church of Constantinople, who lived in the sixth century, says, that Eudocia sent from Jerusalem to Constantinople to the empress Pulcheria, a picture of the holy Virgin painted by St. Luke. But we need not be in no great pain about this, since the true images of saints are the ideas of their virtues, which we should form in our minds, and express by our actions.

Certain it is, that this holy Evangelist has acquainted us with some particulars of the life of the holy Virgin, that could hardly be learned from any one but herself; which may incline us to believe that he had the happiness of her acquaintance, and a tolerable share of her confidence.

With regard to her character, we shall only mention in general, that common remark which the Evangelists make, that she was more disposed to think than to speak; and observed the extraordinary things which were said of her son in silence; or, as they express it, "she pondered them in her heart."

MARY, THE SISTER OF LAZARUS.

This holy woman has been preposterously confounded with the sinful person who sat at the feet of the blessed Jesus weeping, while he was at meat in the house of Simon the leper. (See Luke vii. 37, 39.) Who this sinner was is unknown; some will have her to be Mary Magdalene; but this opinion has nothing more than conjecture for its basis.

But whoever that sinner was, she was a very different person from Mary the sister of Lazarus, who, with her sister Martha, lived with their brother at Bethany, a village near Jerusalem. The blessed Jesus had a particular affection for this family, and often retired to their house with his disciples. One day, and perhaps the first time that Jesus went thither, Martha received him with remarkable affection, and took the greatest pains in providing a proper entertainment for him: but Mary her sister continued sitting at our Saviour's feet listening to his words with peculiar attention. This Martha considered as an instance of disrespect, and therefore said to Jesus, "Lord dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me." But the blessed Jesus justified Mary, by telling her sister, that she had chosen the better part, which should not be taken from her.

Some time after, their brother Lazarus fell sick, and his sisters sent to acquaint Jesus of the misfortune; but he did not arrive at Bethany till after Lazarus was dead. Martha, hearing Jesus was come into the neighborhood, went and told him, that if he had not been absent her brother had been still alive. Jesus promised her that her brother should rise again. To which Martha answered, "I know that he shall rise again at the last day." Jesus replied, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" Martha answered, "Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ the Son of God, which should come into the world."

Having said this, she departed, and gave her sister notice privately, that Jesus was come. Mary, as soon as she heard the welcome tidings, arose and went to Jesus; and as Martha had done before her, said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." The blessed Jesus was greatly moved at the pathetic complaints of these two worthy sisters, and on

asking where they had buried him, they conducted him to the sepulchre.

On his arrival at the place where the body of Lazarus was deposited, the great Redeemer of mankind groaned deeply in his spirit; he wept, he prayed to his Father, and then cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus come forth." The dead obeyed the voice of the Son of God; Lazarus immediately revived, and Jesus restored him to his sisters.

After performing this stupendous miracle, Jesus departed from the neighborhood of Jerusalem, and did not return thither till some days before the passover. Six days before that festival, Jesus came again to Bethany with his disciples, and was invited to a supper at the house of Simon the leper. Martha attended, and Lazarus was one of the guests.

During the supper, Mary, to express her gratitude, took a pound of spikenard, a very precious perfume, and poured it on the head and feet of Jesus, wiping his feet with the hair of her head; and the whole house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Judas Iscariot was highly offended at this generous action; but his Master vindicated Mary, and told him, that by this she had prevented his embalment, signifying that his death and burial were at hand.

After this we have no account of Mary, the sister of Lazarus, in the sacred writings. Several authors, indeed, by not distinguishing properly between Mary, the sister of Martha, and Mary Magdalene, say, that she was present at the crucifixion of the great Redeemer of mankind: and also that both she and her sister accompanied the women who went to embalm the body. This is not, indeed, improbable; but it is certain neither of them are particularly mentioned by the Evangelists. The ancient Latins believed, and the Greeks are still of the same opinion, that both Martha and Mary continued at Jerusalem, and died there; and several ancient Martyrologists place their feast on the nineteenth of January.

JOSEPH.

Joseph, or Joses, was the son of Mary Cleophas, brother to St. James the Less, and a near relation to the blessed Jesus, according to the flesh, being the son of Mary, the holy Virgin's

sister, and Cleophas, who was Joseph's brother, or son to Joseph himself, as several of the ancients suppose; who have asserted that Joseph was married to Mary Cleophas, or Escha, before he was married to the holy Virgin. Some believe Joseph the son of Mary Cleophas, to be the same with Joseph Barsabas, surnamed the Just, who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and was proposed, with St. Matthias, to fill up the traitor Judas' place; but in this there is no certainty. We learn nothing particular in Scripture concerning Joseph, the brother of our Lord. If he was one of those among his near kinsmen who did not believe in him, when they would have persuaded him to go to the feast of the tabernacles, some months before our Saviour's death, it is probable that he was afterwards converted; for it is intimated in Scripture, that at last all our Saviour's brethren believed in him, and St. Chrysostom says, that they were signalized for the eminence of their faith and virtue.

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

Joseph of Arimathea, or of Ranatha, Rama or Ramula, a city between Joppa and Jerusalem, was a Jewish senator, and privately a disciple of Jesus Christ: he was not consentient to the designs of the rest of the Jews, particularly the members of the Sanhedrim, who condemned and put Jesus to death: and when our Saviour was dead, he went boldly to Pilate, and desired the body of Jesus in order to bury it. This he obtained, and accordingly buried it after an honorable manner in a sepulchre newly made in a garden; which was upon the same Mount Calvary where Jesus had been crucified. After he had placed it there, he closed the entrance of it with a stone cut particularly for this purpose, and which exactly filled the open part of it.

The Greek church keeps the festival of Joseph of Arimathea, July, the 31st.

We do not meet with his name in the old Latin Martyrologies, nor was it inserted in the Roman till after the year 1585. The body of Joseph of Arimathea was, it is said, brought to the abbey of Moyenmontier by Fortunatus, archbishop of Grada; to which Charlemagne had given this monastery under the denomi-

nation of a benefice. His remains were honored till the tenth age; but then the monastery being given to canons, who continued seventy years there, the relics were carried away by some foreign monks, and so lost with many others.

NICODEMUS.

Nicodemus, one of the disciples of our blessed Saviour, was a Jew by nation, and by sect a Pharisee. The Gospel calls him a ruler of the Jews; and Christ gives him the name of a Master of Israel. When our Saviour began to manifest himself by his miracles, at Jerusalem, at the first passover which he celebrated there after his baptism, Nicodemus made no doubt but that he was the Messiah, and came to him by night, that he might learn of him the way of salvation. Jesus told him, that no one could see the kingdom of heaven, except he should be born again. Nicodemus taking this in the literal sense, made answer, How can a man be born again? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb? To which Jesus replied, If a man be not born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit. Nicodemus asked him, How can these things be? Jesus answered: "Art thou a master of Israel, and ignorant of these things? We tell you what we know, and you receive not our testimony. If you believe not common things, and which may be called earthly, how will you believe me if I speak to you of heavenly things? And as Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up on high: for God has so loved the world that he has given his only Son; so that no man who believes in him shall perish, but shall have eternal life; for God sent his Son into the world, that the world through him might be saved."

After this conversation, Nicodemus became a disciple of Jesus Christ; and there is no doubt to be made but he came to hear him as often as our Saviour came to Jerusalem. It happened on a time, that the priests and Pharisees had sent officers to seize Jesus, who returned to them, and made this report, that never man spoke as he did; to which the Pharisees replied, "Are you also of his disciples? Is there any one of the elders

or Pharisees that have believed in him?" Then Nicodemus thought himself obliged to make answer, saying, "Does the law permit us to condemn any one before he is heard?" To which they replied. "Are you also a Galilean? Read the Scriptures, and you will find that never any prophet came out of Galilee." After this the council was dismissed. At last Nicodemus declared himself openly a disciple of Jesus Christ, when he came with Joseph of Arimathea to pay the last duties to the body of Christ crucified: which they took down from the cross, embalmed and laid in the sepulchre.

Nicodemus received baptism from the disciples of Christ: but it is uncertain whether before or after his passion.

The Jews being informed of this, deposed him from his dignity of senator, excommunicated and drove him from Jerusalem. It is said also, that they would have put him to death; but that in consideration of Gamaliel, who was his uncle, or cousin-german, they contented themselves with beating him almost to death, and plundering his goods.

Gamaliel conveyed him to his country house, and provided him with what was necessary for his support; and when he died, Gamaliel buried him honorably near St. Stephen.

His body was discovered in 415, together with those of St. Stephen and Gamaliel; and the Latin church pays honor to al' three on the third of August.

JOHN MARK

John Mark, cousin to St. Barnabas, and a disciple of his, was the son of a Christian woman, named Mary, who had a house in Jerusalem, where the apostles and the faithful generally used to meet. Here they were at prayers in the night, when St. Peter who was delivered out of prison by the angel, came and knocked at the door: and in this house the celebrated church of Sion was said to have been afterwards established.

John Mark, whom some very impropely confound with the Evangelist St. Mark, adhered to St. Paul and St. Barnabas, and followed them in their return to Antioch: he continued in their company and service till they came to Perga, in Pamphylia, but then seeing that they were undertaking a longer

journey, he left them, and returned to Jerusalem. This happened in the year 45 of the common æra.

Some years after, that is to say in the year 51, Paul and Barnabas preparing to return into Asia, in order to visit the churches which they had formed there, Barnabas was of opinion that John Mark should accompany them in this journey; but Paul would not consent to it: upon which occasion these two apostles separated. Paul went to Asia, and Barnabas, with John Mark, to the Isle of Cyprus. What John Mark did after this journey we do not know, till we find him at Rome in the year 63, performing signal service for St. Paul during his imprisonment.

The apostle speaks advantageously of him in his epistle to the Collossians: "Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, saluteth you. If he cometh unto you, receive him." He makes mention of him again in his epistle to Philemon, written in the year 62, at which time he was with St. Paul at Rome; but in the year 65 he was with Timothy in Asia. And St. Paul writing to Timothy, desires him to bring Marcus to Rome; adding, that he was useful for him in the ministry of the Gospel.

In the Greek and Latin churches, the festival of John Mark is kept on the 27th of September. Some say that he was bishop of Biblis, in Phœnicia; the Greeks give him the title of apostle; and say that the sick were cured by his shadow only. It is very probable that he died at Ephesus, where his tomb was very much celebrated and resorted to. He is sometimes called simply John or Mark. The year of his death we are strangers to; and shall not collect all that is said of him in apocryphal and uncertain authors.

CLEMENT.

Clement is mentioned by St. Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians, where the apostle says that Clement's name is written in the book of life. The generality of the fathers, and other interpreters, make no question but that this is the same Clement who succeeded St. Peter after Linus and Cletus, in the government of the church of Rome; and this seems to be intimated, when in the office of St. Clement's day, that church appoints this part of the epistle to the Philippians to be read.

We find several things relating to Clement's life in the recognitions and constitutions called apostolical; but as those works are not looked upon as authentic, though there may be truths in them derived from the tradition of the first ages, little stress is to be laid upon their testimony. St. Chrysostom thinks that Clement, mentioned by St. Paul in his epistle to the Philippians, was one of the apostle's constant fellow-travelers. Irenæus, Origen, Clemens of Alexandria, and others of the ancients assert, that Clement was a disciple of the apostles; that he had seen them and heard their instructions. St. Epiphanius, Jerome, Rufinus, Bede, and some others, were of opinion, that as the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, could not be continually at Rome, by reason of the frequent journeys which they were obliged to make to other places, and it was not proper that the city of Rome should be without a bishop, there was a necessity to supply the want of them by establishing Linus, Anaclet, and Clement there. The constitutions inform us, that Linus was ordained by St. Paul; Tertullian and Epiphanius say, that St. Peter ordained Clement. Rufinus tells us, that this apostle chose St. Clement for his successor. But Epiphanius believes, that after he had been made bishop of Rome by St. Peter, he refused to exercise his office, till, after the death of Linus and Anaclet, he was obliged to take upon himself the care of the church; and this is the most generally received opinion. St. Peter's immediate successor was Linus: Linus was succeeded by Anacletus; and Anacletus by Clement, in the year of Christ 91, which was the tenth of Domitian's reign.

During his pontificate, the church of Corinth having been disturbed by a spirit of division, St. Clement wrote a large letter to the Corinthians, which is still extant, and was so much esteemed by the ancients, that they read it publicly in many churches; and some have been inclined to range it among the canonical writers. The emperor Domitian intended to declare war against the church of Christ: his design was made known to Hermas, and he ordered to give a copy of it to Clement, that he might communicate it to other churches, and exhort them to provide against the storm. We have no certain account of what happened to St. Clement, during this persecution: but we are very well assured that he lived to the third year of Trajan. His festival is set down by Bede, and all the Latin Martyrologies, on the twenty-third of November. The Greeks honor him on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth of the same month. Rufinus, and pope Zozimus, give him the title of Martyr; and the Roman church, in its canon, places him among the saints who have sacrificed their lives for Jesus Christ. We read in an ancient history, [illegible] the authenticity of

which, however, there are some exceptions, that St. Clement was banished by Trajan to the Chersonesus, beyond the Euxine Sea: besides other particulars in the history which we shall not mention, as not being well authenticated.

MARY MAGDALENE.

Mary Magdalene was a native either of Magdala, a town in Galilee, on the other side of Jordan, or Magdalos, a town situated at the foot of Mount Carmel, and had her surname from the place of her birth. Some will have it that she was the sinner mentioned by St. Luke, chap. vii. 37, &c., but this opinion is built only on conjecture. The Evangelists Luke and Mark tell us, that Jesus had cast out of her seven devils; which some understand in a literal, and others in a figurative sense.

But however this be, she became a constant attendant on the blessed Jesus, after he had removed her plague. She followed him to Mount Calvary, continued amidst the Roman guards at the foot of the cross, with the holy Virgin, and saw his precious body laid in the tomb. After which she returned to Jerusalem. to purchase spices to embalm him, as soon as the sabbath was over.

It was she who carried the welcome tidings to Peter and John; and to her our blessed Lord himself first appeared after his resurrection. The apostles did not, however, believe her report till it was confirmed by others, and they themselves had seen the Saviour of the world.

We have no further account of Mary Magdalene in the sacred writings. But Modestus, archbishop of Constantinople, in the seventh century, tells us, that she continued at Jerusalem till the death of the holy Virgin, after which she retired to Ephesus, and resided with St. John till she sealed the faith she had so long professed with her blood. She was buried by the Christians at Ephesus, where her tomb was shown in the seventh century.

But the emperor, Leo the Wise, caused her body to be removed from Ephesus to Constantinople, the latter end of the ninth century, in order to its being interred in the church erected to the honor of the apostles.

Thus have we given the fullest account of the followers of the blessed Jesus; the persons who spread the light of the Gospel over the whole world, removed the veil of ignorance and superstition drawn over the kingdoms of the earth, and taught us the method of attaining eternal happiness in the courts of the New Jerusalem.

May we all follow their glorious example! May we imitate their faith, their piety, their charity, and their love! Then shall we pass "through things temporal in such a manner, that we shall finally gain the things eternal," and through the merits of an all-perfect Redeemer, be admitted as worthy guests at the Marriage supper of the Lamb.

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